HIMMELFARB'S ENLIGHTENMENT
DIANA SCHAUB

the weekly Standard

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Master & Commander

HE SECOND TERM

illiam Kristol on Bush's vigor
ed Barnes on Condi Rice
ephen F. Hayes on the CIA
cholas Eberstadt on North Korea
hn D. Mueller on taxes and Social Security
m Donnelly & Vance Serchuk on defense

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REBUILDING WHAT CHARLEY, FRANCES, IVAN AND JEANNE TOOK AWAY.

When Florida and the Gulf Coast were hit by four hurricanes this year, more than 7,000 utility workers from across the U.S. and Canada helped restore power. The damage from these hurricanes was unprecedented. 8,500,000 outages. 26,000 distribution poles and 20,000 transformers destroyed. 13,000 miles of downed power lines.

The electric utility industry's response to the hurricanes of 2004 follows a tradition of electric companies pulling together in times of crisis. To help combat the destruction of Hurricanes Charley, Frances, Ivan and Jeanne, restoration specialists drove to the Gulf Coast from as far away as California, Vermont, Texas and Quebec to join Florida utilities in their extraordinary efforts. Traveling thousands of miles, these brave men and women worked around the clock in unfamiliar and difficult terrain until the job was done.

The Edison Electric Institute salutes the men, women and electric companies who helped turn the power back on.

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Contents

November 29, 2004 • Volume 10, Number 11

2 Scrapbook ..... *Arafat, academia, and the* Times.

4 Casual. . . . . *Christopher Caldwell, political anthropologist.*

5 Correspondence. . . . . *Purple America, Dewey, etc.*

7 Editorial ..... *Happy Thanksgiving*

Articles

8 Goodbye Colin, Hello Condi *Regime change at the State Department.* ..... BY FRED BARNES

10 Porter's House *CIA Director Porter Goss takes charge.* ..... BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

13 Permanent Minority Leader? *Harry Reid takes over from Tom Daschle.* ..... BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

15 Now You Don't Tell Us *What the CIA's bin Laden expert used to say about Iraq's al Qaeda ties.* . . BY THOMAS JOSCELYN

16 A Bigger, Badder, Better Army *The military needed for the Bush Doctrine.* . . . BY TOM DONNELLY & VANCE SERCHUK

19 Tear Down This Tyranny *A Korea strategy for Bush's second term.* ..... BY NICHOLAS EBERSTADT

21 Bush's European Itinerary *Where he should really go.* ..... BY GERARD BAKER

Cover: Thomas Fluharty

Features

24 Taxes, Social Security & the Politics of Reform
A Reaganite plan for Reagan's heirs. ..... BY JOHN D. MUELLER

Books & Arts

31 What is Enlightenment? *Gertrude Himmelfarb explores three paths to modern times.* ..... BY DIANA SCHAUB

34 American Gothic *Philip Roth pens a what-if novel.* ..... BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

37 Cheating History *Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin—the historians who let us down.* ..... BY DAVID SKINNER

39 THE STANDARD READER ..... *Yuval Levin on Wesley J. Smith's* Consumer's Guide to a Brave New World

40 Parody ..... *Kmart and Sears rebrand themselves.*

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the weekly Standard

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Well, *Duuuh*

All obvious jokes about obviousness aside, there were some genuinely interesting and useful data in reporter John Tierney's November 18 *New York Times* account of recent survey research by Santa Clara University economics professor Daniel Klein. Professor Klein has conducted a nationwide poll of 1,000 fellow academicians and found that among full-time faculty in the humanities and social sciences, Democrats now outnumber Republicans by a factor of at least seven to one. The partisan imbalance is significantly more pronounced today than it was 30 years ago. And, if anything, Klein figures it's likely to grow worse, not better: Younger, junior-faculty ranks are almost exclusively Democratic. Klein's separate, more detailed survey of the University of California, Berkeley and Stanford faculties, for example, identified 183 Democratic assistant and associate professors, but only 6 Republicans.

Republicans Outnumbered In Academia, Studies Find

Not coincidentally, as Tierney is canny enough to note, Federal Election Commission records indicate that the University of California employs more people who made financial contributions to John Kerry's 2004 presidential campaign than any other single employer in the United States. (Harvard ranks second. Microsoft is a distant sixth.)

But Berkeley officials, for their part, "dispute the accusations of faculty bias" that might naturally arise from data like this. "The essence of a great university is developing and sharing new knowledge as well as questioning old dogma," chancellor Robert J. Birgeneau tells the *Times*. "We do this in an environment which prizes academic freedom and freedom of expression. These principles are respected by all of our faculty at U.C. Berkeley, no matter what their personal politics are."

Berkeley linguistics professor George P. Lakoff must not have gotten the memo.

What's the fuss about, he wonders? Of course there aren't but a handful of Republican professors at American universities: It's only liberals who have the mind and spirit for the job.

"Unlike conservatives," Lakoff explains, "they believe in working for the public good and social justice, as well as knowledge and art for their own sake, which are what the humanities and social sciences are all about." ♦

How's That Again?

The Scrapbook can't decide: Maybe it was a translation problem. Or maybe somebody over at the *New York Times* corrections desk was just back from a trip to the dentist's office and the anesthesia hadn't quite worn off. Or . . . whatever. This was the *Times*'s lead correction-column item on November 11:

"A picture caption yesterday with an article about polarization in the Netherlands over the killing of Theo van Gogh, a Dutch filmmaker, by a man the police have described as a Muslim extremist, gave an incorrect translation of a sign displayed at Mr. van Gogh's funeral. It read: 'Silence = Deadly. Speaking = Death. But Thinking — That, Never!' (not 'Mouth Shut = Deadly. Speaking = Death. Never Think!')."

Capisce? ♦

Curse of the Lame Braino

The competition has been fierce, but top honors for Dumbest Analogy in a Yasser Arafat Obituary must go to former congressman and still-active Israel-o-phobe Paul Findley. Writing in the November 9 *Daily Star*, an English-language newspaper published throughout the Middle

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East, Findley wistfully recalled how the PLO chairman's "perpetually scruffy beard belied his genial, warm manner." Come to think of it, Findley added, "While watching the recent World Series, it occurred to me that Arafat would fit comfortably with the scruffy but genial Red Sox players." Except for the part about murdering Jews, presumably.

Genial but scruffy Red Sox centerfielder Johnny Damon was unavailable for comment.

Incidentally: Longtime WEEKLY STANDARD readers may remember that Paul Findley offered up an equally prize-worthy *mot injuste* in the spring of 2001 when his unfortunately timed book *Silent No More* dubbed Osama bin Laden "one of the preeminent heroes of Afghans, occupying a role similar to the Marquis de Lafayette" during the American Revolution. ♦

International Man of Mystery

Speaking of Yasser Arafat . . . Here's David Remnick, in a November 22 *New Yorker* obit headlined "The Old Man": "Modest in his personal habits and his material desires, Yasser Arafat was grandiose only in his sense of mission."

And here's David Remnick again, same piece, eight paragraphs later: "He ruled the West Bank and Gaza as his fief, personally controlling accounts filled with billions in foreign money and doling out lucrative concessions to his deputies and millions in cash to his wife." ♦

Housekeeping Note

THE WEEKLY STANDARD has recently switched printers, which means, among other things, that subscribers' copies are now being mailed from a different city. We hope and expect this change also means that many of our subscribers will receive their copies sooner. But we'd like to make sure—and we intend to do whatever we can to speed things up still further—so we're once again requesting your assistance.

Please visit a special page on our website, *www.weeklystandard.com/mail*, where you'll find a very brief form by which you can keep us posted about precisely when your magazine is arriving each week.

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Either way, please let us hear from you as often as possible. The more we know about how our postal deliveries are working, the better we'll be able to identify and fix whatever specific problems might still exist. Thanks. ♦

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Casual

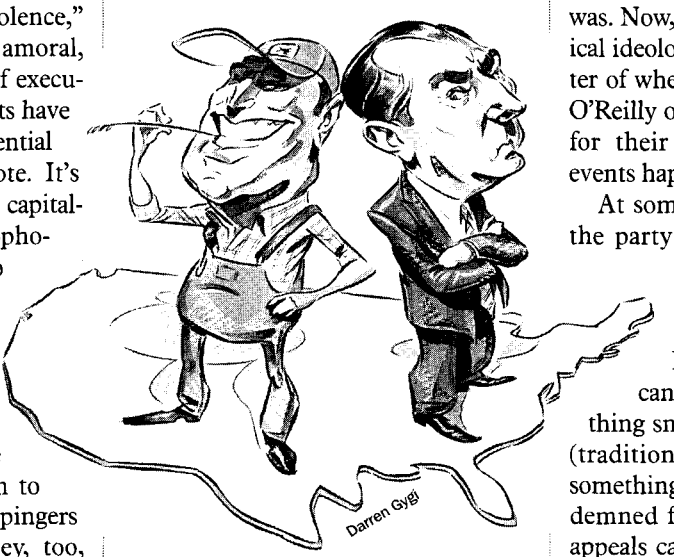
Smiley's People

Probably no article has traveled more miles on the Internet this season than the *cri de coeur* that the novelist Jane Smiley wrote for *Slate* 24 hours after the election. Using her supposedly Bush-supporting relatives in Missouri as evidence, Smiley chalked the election results up to the "ignorance and bloodlust" of red-state Americans, who "love to cheat," "have a taste for violence," and admire their "resentful, amoral, avaricious, and arrogant" chief executive. "The reason the Democrats have lost five of the last seven presidential elections is simple," she wrote. It's something about how "the big capitalists" are using religion, homophobia, racism, and kryptonite to wage war against workers and consumers. (Maybe I'm misremembering about the kryptonite.)

Since one copy of the article reached me under the header "FW: How Dems aim to keep losing," I'm assuming its pingers are mostly Republicans. They, too, think the Democrats' losing streak has a simple explanation—a bedrock contempt for the electorate, of which Smiley's brief is typical. (*We keep telling them, "Vote for me, morons!" But they just—don't—listen.*)

Such contempt is most visible in liberals from the heartland. Smiley's fellow Midwesterner, an Ohio cartoonist named Ted Rall, has sent out a communiqué deploring "militant Christianist Republicans" and "knee-jerk conformists" and warning that "the biggest red-blue divide is intellectual." Exhibit A is, once again, the author's kith and kin. And it was not the *Village Voice* that called rural Americans "rubes, fools, and hate mongers." It was the *Stranger*, an events paper based in the Pacific Northwest.

Hotheads like Rall and the *Stranger* editors pop up (or off) after any contentious election. But Smiley is a subtle, even elegant, thinker. Her books are non-Manichean, and some (*Moo* comes to mind) include narrow-minded small-town ideologues who are not Republicans. So what is responsible for the gap between the richness of the world laid down in her novels and the dialectical dogmatism of her political commentary?



It is that liberalism means different things to different people, and in small towns it has come to mean something rather weird.

The city neighborhood I live in is so monolithically liberal that Kerry won the local elementary school's mock election by 252 votes to 16. Yet there is diversity among my neighbors. You can have a level-headed (even stimulating) political conversation with a feminist from the Upper West Side or a Kennedy-loving civil-rights lawyer or someone who used to organize the janitors' union in East L.A. For them, liberalism is a *belief*. That is, among the narratives about what politics should do, liberalism is the one that seems to make the most sense.

But there are also people in my neighborhood who cling to their leftish views with a sputtering and tenacious bigotry, who think "flexibility" means lurching between smugness and anger. These are, by and large, the white liberals who hail from the sticks.

There are basically two kinds of people in small towns—those who assume, as Shaw put it, that the customs of the tribe are the laws of nature; and those who have sussed out that there is a big and varied world beyond Main Street. This division used to have little to do with politics. But small-town politics in its Norman Rockwell variant—all those democratic battles over school bonds and ousting the crooked sheriff—is not what it was. Now, all politics is national. Political ideology, for most people, is a matter of whether they prefer to have Bill O'Reilly or Diane Rehm console them for their impotence in the face of events happening elsewhere.

At some point, Democrats became the party of small-town people who think they're too big for their small towns. It is hard to say how it happened: Perhaps it is that Republicans' primary appeal is to something small-towners take for granted (tradition), while Democrats' is to something that small-towners are condemned for lacking (diversity). Both appeals can be effective, but it is only the latter that incites people to repudiate the culture in which they grew up. Perhaps it is that at universities—through which pass all small-town people aiming to climb to a higher social class—Democratic party affiliation is the sine qua non of being taken for a serious, non-hayseed human being.

For these people, liberalism is not a *belief* at all. No, it's something more important: a badge of certain social aspirations. That is why the laments of the small-town leftists get voiced with such intemperance and desperation. As if those who voice them are fighting off the nagging thought: *If the Republicans aren't particularly evil, then maybe I'm not particularly special.*

Christopher Caldwell

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Arnold vs. Slick Willy?

John J. DiIulio Jr.'s "Wooing Purple America" (Nov. 15) is anchored by the dual premises that our system should have more than one viable political party, and that cooperation between the parties should be encouraged.

Given the 2004 election results, may I suggest a project that would promote real bipartisan cooperation and allow both parties to nominate their strongest candidate for 2008? Let's pass a constitutional amendment that would modify the 22nd Amendment so that it simply limits a person to two *consecutive* terms as president, instead of two *lifetime* terms. (In other words, after sitting out at least one term, a person having served 2 terms could run again.)

But—and here's where the bipartisan part comes in—this amendment would *also* remove the constitutional prohibition on foreign-born persons becoming president.

This would clear the way for the Democratic party to run southern, red-state Bill Clinton again in 2008. (Hillary will not work as a substitute!) And the Republican party would be free to nominate its blue-state California "Governator."

Now wouldn't that be fun?

Mark Cassel
Overland Park, KS

The Wedding-Cake Man

David Gelernter writes, "Walter Winchell (or someone) is supposed to have called Dewey 'the little man on top of the wedding cake'" ("Truman Beats Dewey! Again!!" Nov. 15).

Actually, it was Alice Roosevelt Longworth, daughter of Teddy Roosevelt and wife of the great Republican Speaker of the House "Slick" Nick Longworth, who called Thomas Dewey the perfect little man atop a wedding cake.

Nicky Billou
Toronto, Ontario

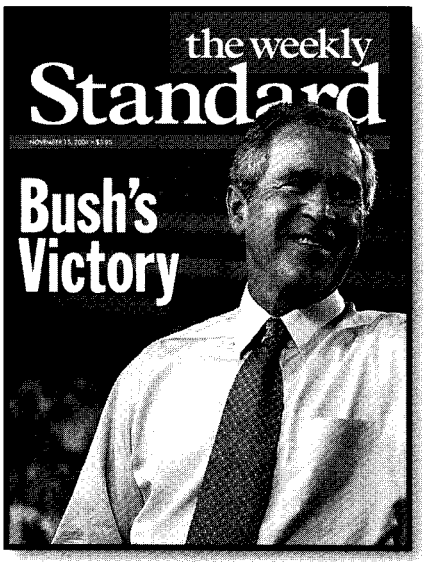
Bush's Victory

William Kristol's editorial "Misunderestimated" (Nov. 15) hits the nail on the head. Kerry supporters and anti-Bush voters would do well to heed its message.

George W. Bush faced difficult challenges in both the domestic and international arenas. But he held to his policies, displayed strong leadership, and did not waver. Candidates with these characteristics typically generate better electoral outcomes than candidates without them.

Bush will face more challenges over the next four years. The tone of his acceptance speech reflected a desire for bipartisanship. Let's hope both sides appreciate the benefits of working together.

Ellis Tallman
Atlanta, GA



California's Hard Cell

Regarding Wesley J. Smith's "Suckers for 'Science'" (Nov. 15), the California stem-cell initiative passed largely because it was presented as an anti-Bush vote. This was the wrong reason for the right vote.

Embryonic stem-cell research is not about Alzheimer's Disease or Lazarus-like resurrections. It is just good, front-line science that unfortunately became a political talking point for scientifically ignorant partisans. The success of this initiative is a welcome sign for basic scientific research.

It is also investment capital for California, and will go far in helping the state's finances. All told, it is probably the political coup of the season.

Donald P. Speer
Ward Cove, AK

"Know-Nothing" Raines

How could The Scrapbook (Nov. 15) give Howell Raines a pass on his misuse of the facts? Raines wrote that George W. Bush was "a graduate of our second oldest university."

Last time I checked, the second oldest American university was William and Mary (even though it refers to itself as a "college"). Bush never said he graduated from there. His alma mater, Yale, is our *third* oldest university.

Bernie Heiler
Middleway, WV

Errata

Because of an editing error in John J. DiIulio Jr.'s "Wooing Purple America" (Nov. 15), George W. Bush's margin of defeat in the 2000 popular vote was incorrectly stated as "more than 3.5 million votes." Bush actually lost the popular vote to Al Gore by just over 500,000 votes.

Also, one of our recent Scrapbook items (Nov. 1 / Nov. 8) was perhaps unclear on the date of Canadian independence. With the passage of the British North America Act in 1867, Canada became a Dominion of the British Commonwealth. Through the 1931 Statute of Westminster, London granted all of its Dominions, including Canada, effective independence. But it was not until 1982, when Parliament passed the Canada Act, that Britain formally relinquished its power to make laws affecting Canada and the Canadian constitution.

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the weekly Standard

Happy Thanksgiving

We're cheerful. Why not? Bush won. And he won while hanging tough in Iraq. There was no talk of exit strategies, no phony promises that we were soon going to draw down our troop levels, no minimizing of the difficulties of the road that lay ahead. There was only the promise that we would continue to shoulder our responsibilities and do our duty.

The president presented himself for the judgment of the American people with 150,000 troops in the field, taking real casualties and on the verge of launching a major offensive. The people didn't flinch. They showed fortitude and judgment, sticking with Bush and the difficult path he has chosen, a path in some respects made more difficult by mistakes his administration had made, but not one his opponent could be counted on to follow to success.

David Horsey / Reprinted with permission of Tribune Media Service, 2004

So the election was good news. And the two-and-a-half weeks since have provided more good news. Bush is determined to take control of his administration. He has thought through his second-term personnel and policy agendas. He seems determined to fix the dysfunctional relationship between Defense and State that too often hampered the execution of his foreign policy in the first term.

Moving Condoleezza Rice to State was the indispensable start. Strong deputies at State and the National Security Council should be next—deputies who can work with Rice and new national security adviser Stephen Hadley, and who know how to make the institutions work in accord with Bush's policy. Backing up the efforts of Porter Goss to shake up the Central Intelligence Agency will also be important. What remains to be done is to announce new leadership for the Department of Defense. This, surely, would be an opportunity for a strong, Bush Doctrine-supporting outsider, someone who of course would be a team player, but someone who could also work with the military and broaden support for the president's policy. Is John McCain, or Rudy Giuliani, or Joe Lieberman too much to hope for?

Meanwhile, the offensive in Falluja has gone better than expected, and we are following up in Mosul, Ramadi, and elsewhere as necessary. The president is clearly resolved to mobilize all available military, political, and diplomatic resources to bring off elections in Iraq, and successfully to prosecute the larger war on terror and hasten the transformation of the Middle East.

We know that Bush has been reading Natan Sharansky's fine new book, *The Case for Democracy*. He's acting as though Alexander Hamilton is on his reading list, too. The "test of a good government," Hamilton argued in *The Federalist*, "is its aptitude and tendency to produce a good administration." And, he famously noted, "energy in the executive is a leading character in the definition of good government"; "that unity is conducive to energy will not be disputed"; a "feeble executive" is often made so by division within it; "a feeble executive . . . is but another phrase for a bad execution"; "and a government ill executed, whatever it may be in theory, must be, in practice, a bad government."

As chief executive, since his reelection, President Bush has acted with the kind of "decision, activity, secrecy, and despatch" that Hamilton called for. Obviously a huge amount remains to be done. Obviously mistakes will be made. Obviously reality will provide its nasty comeuppances. Intellectually, it's always safer to be a pessimist than an optimist. But Bush's conduct in office since his reelection allows us, at least for now, to be unusually cheerful pessimists.

—*William Kristol*

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Goodbye Colin, Hello Condi

Regime change at the State Department.

BY FRED BARNES

PRESIDENT BUSH always believed he would be reelected. So in the weeks before November 2, he repeatedly discussed with White House aides who should replace the departing cabinet members in his second term. And decisions were made, pre-Election Day. Alberto Gonzales, the president's legal counsel, would succeed John Ashcroft as attorney general, and Margaret Spellings, chief White House domestic adviser, would take over for Rod Paige as education secretary. Another decision: Those planning to leave the administration at their leisure over the coming months would be asked to depart immediately. When Secretary of State Colin Powell met with Bush on November 11, he requested to stay a few extra months to tie up loose ends at the State Department. Bush said no, and Powell's resignation was announced the following Monday. The next day, national security adviser Condoleezza Rice was named as Powell's successor.

If anyone thought the president would relax after an arduous campaign—I certainly did—they were wrong. The three prior presidents to win reelection (Nixon, Reagan, Clinton) had relatively skimpy plans for their second terms, but Bush has a breathtakingly ambitious agenda. To achieve it, he wants full control over his administration. He wants cabinet members he knows and trusts. Thus, what an official calls "the Gonzales model" of dispatching White House aides or other loyalists to take over key agencies is being followed. The president also believes the new cabinet officers should be installed as quickly as possible. That way they'll be ready early next year for expected struggles with Congress, recalcitrant federal bureaucracies, and opponents of America and of Bush's drive for democracy around the world.

UPI / Landov / Ron Sachs

The president hasn't listed his priorities for 2005, but it's not difficult to figure them out. Winning the war in Iraq and the battle against terrorists is number one. The second priority, given the likelihood of as many as three or four Supreme Court vacancies, is gaining Senate confirmation of conservative justices. Number three: Social Security reform. A bill is now being drafted at the White House to create individual investment accounts and to produce savings aimed at keeping the Social Security system from insolvency. Four, tort reform. Five, tort reform. Six, an energy bill that increases domestic oil and gas production. The list goes on, but I'll stop there.

The most significant decision was to send Rice to the State Department. Presidential aides insist no one else was in the running to replace Powell. The move has many ramifications. For one thing, it means the center of national security policy-making, aside from Bush himself, shifts to the State Department. And things will change there. Powell, reflecting the State bureaucracy, was at odds with the president on Iraq, Israel and the Palestinians, the pursuit of democracy in the Middle East and Arab countries, Iran, North Korea, and who knows what else. Powell allowed at least one senior official to tell European counterparts they should wait for John Kerry to be elected. Then policies they and the American official prefer would be put in place. Rice, on the other hand, reflects Bush's views on all these policies. Her promotion also means the dysfunctional relationship with the Pentagon and State endlessly clashing over policy will cease.

One of Rice's tasks will be to impose these policies on the State Department without touching off a revolt or clandestine efforts to undermine the president, such as occurred at the CIA and is only now being quashed by the new director, Porter Goss. Rice, however, usually acts with a light touch. This has prompted criticism of her as a weak manager. After all, she didn't ride herd on Powell and Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. But, other than the president, who could? In any case, she'll need a strong deputy to run the

Fred Barnes is executive editor of THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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department day to day, plus a crew of new assistant secretaries in sync with Bush's policies.

Another urgent task for Rice is to begin making the case for Bush's policies around the world, especially in Europe. There's a name for this—diplomacy. The media assumed Powell did this, but in fact he did not. Diplomacy aimed at persuading the wary or the opposed has to be carried out face to face. But Powell rarely visited Europe. On the eve of the invasion of Iraq, several American officials traveled to Turkey in hopes of convincing the Turks to allow the 4th Infantry Division to attack Iraq from the north, from Turkey. Powell would surely have had more influence than the Americans who lobbied the Turks, but he did not go. The Turks barred the use of the territory. It's safe to say Rice will travel.

A big question in Bush's first term was where Rice would come down. Would she side with the more dovish Powell or the hawkish coterie of Vice President Cheney, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld, and Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz? Within months, the answer was obvious. She tilted toward the hawks. Or perhaps she simply followed the president's lead in often discounting Powell's advice and embracing tougher policies destined to divide the United States from some of its European allies. Still, Rice was known for her caution. Some in the Cheney-Rumsfeld camp complained that she was too timid. But Bush didn't think so. He expanded her authority.

The terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001, brought Bush and Rice even closer. Both were traumatized by the event and concluded the world had fundamentally changed. After the fall of Soviet communism, America seemed to face no major threat in the world. But 9/11 persuaded Bush and Rice that America would have to wage war against Islamic jihadists, probably for decades. The reaction at the State Department was not so drastic.

Nor did Powell and State respond enthusiastically to Bush's broadest foreign policy goal, democratization of the Arab world. They are realists who think such goals are unattainable and a distraction from pursuing America's national interest, narrowly construed. That would be fine if Richard Nixon or the elder George Bush were president. But the current President Bush is not a realist. He's a moralist who believes the best route to peace and security is through planting democracy in countries—Iraq, for one—where it doesn't exist. One example: For the Palestinians, it means democracy first, then statehood. This is the opposite of the realist formula.

Rice, too, is a moralist. This makes all the difference. And it's why Bush can't wait for her to take over as secretary of state. ♦

Porter's House

CIA Director Porter Goss takes charge.

BY STEPHEN F. HAYES

On Friday, November 5, 2004, Patrick Murray had a blunt warning for a top career official in the CIA's clandestine service: No more leaks. Murray, who has a reputation as a no-nonsense manager, had come to the agency from Capitol Hill as a top aide to Porter Goss, the former chairman of the House Select Committee on Intelligence who took over as CIA director in late September.

For months leading up to the election, elements within the CIA had leaked information damaging to the reelection prospects of George W. Bush. Some of the leaks were authorized, some were not. Michael Scheuer, head of the CIA's bin Laden unit from 1996 to 1999 who recently quit the agency in order to be free to criticize the intelligence community, said that CIA higher-ups had given him permission to speak to the media anonymously to "bash the president." Authorized or not, the result of the steady flow of leaks was the same. Bush was portrayed as incompetent and his policies disastrous. CIA-friendly reporters, eager to keep their sources happy, stuck to the agency line.

One significant leak landed on the front page of the *New York Times* on September 16, 2004. Prospects for success in Iraq, the CIA assessed, ranged from bleak to grim. The story and its timing coincided nicely with the Kerry campaign's effort to paint postwar Iraq as Vietnam-in-the-desert. Then in October, less than two weeks after Goss was confirmed, "past and current agency officials" sabotaged Goss's pick to be CIA executive director, in what Bush administration figures considered a brushback pitch. Those agency officials revealed to *Washington Post* reporter Walter Pincus that Michael Kostiw, a respected former CIA official and immediate past staff director of the House terrorism subcommittee, had been arrested for shoplifting in 1981 and subsequently resigned from the CIA. "He is one of the brightest minds in the intelligence community," a senior Bush administration national security official told me months before Goss was nominated. Kostiw withdrew from consideration for the CIA job one day after the leak.

So it's no wonder that Goss was upset about leaks. Murray had told the associate deputy director of counterterrorism that the new agency leadership would not tolerate media leaks. This person reported the conversation to Michael Sulick, associate deputy CIA director for operations. Sulick, in turn, alerted his boss, Stephen Kappes, deputy CIA director for operations, and a meeting between Sulick, Kappes, Murray, and Goss was hastily arranged. Goss participated in

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most of the tense meeting. After he left, however, according to a source familiar with the confrontation, Murray reiterated the warning about leaks. Sulick took the advice as a threat and, calling Murray "a Hill puke," threw a stack of papers in his direction.

The following day, Goss summoned Kappes to discuss the altercation. Goss told Kappes that such behavior is unacceptable at his CIA and ordered Kappes to reassign Sulick to a post outside of the building. Goss suggested making Sulick the CIA station chief in New York City. Kappes refused to reassign Sulick and told Goss that he would resign if Sulick were removed from his post. Goss told Kappes to resign, and Kappes told Goss he intended to take the matter to the White House.

On Saturday, November 13, 2004, the escalating dispute over leaking was leaked to the *Washington Post*. That story and a follow-up the next day made clear that this was a narrative with good guys and bad guys.

The top advisers Goss had brought with him from the Hill, according to the *Post*, were "disgruntled" former CIA officials "widely known" for their "abrasive management style" and for criticizing the agency. One had left the CIA after an undistinguished intelligence career and another is known for being "highly partisan."

On the other side, though, were disinterested civil servants: an unnamed "highly respected case officer" and Kappes, "whose accomplishments include persuading Libyan leader Moammar Gaddafi to renounce weapons of mass destruction this year." (Some might point out that the capture of Saddam Hussein, which preceded Gaddafi's renunciation by five days, and the Iraq war were also, well, persuasive.)

White House officials refused to discuss the conversations involving Goss and Kappes. The result was clear enough. Both Kappes and Sulick resigned on Monday morning.

On Wednesday the 17th, the *New York Times* ran a front-page story about an internal memo that Goss had sent agency employees. The headline and lede set the tone. "New CIA Chief Tells Workers to Back Administration Policies," were the words atop an article that began: "Porter J. Goss, the new intelligence chief, has told Central Intelligence Agency employees that their job is to 'support the administration and its policies in our work,' a copy of an internal memorandum shows."

Peter Steiner

Conventional wisdom was already firm: Goss and his cronies, embittered CIA failures all, were out to exact political revenge. John Roberts, anchoring *CBS Evening News*, wondered aloud, "What went wrong?" A *Boston Globe* editorial claimed the Goss "purge" was likely the "settling of partisan scores rather than an effort to introduce genuine accountability."

Let's entertain an alternative scenario: that after several years of painful and very public intelligence failures by the CIA, the new director and his team hope to make changes that will protect Americans; that Goss will draw on his decade as a CIA operative in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Europe and his seven years as chairman of the House Select Committee on Intelligence to ameliorate a deteriorating situation that he watched from the front row; that perhaps it is the CIA officials who leaked against Bush who have a political agenda or interests to protect.

It was possible to take in most press accounts over the last week and never encounter those possibilities. It would appear that reporters who cover the intelligence community—particularly beat reporters from the *Washington Post*, the *New York Times*, *Newsday*, and Knight Ridder newspapers—often simply regurgitate storylines presented to them by the most political current and former CIA officials. Democratic elected officials furrow their brows about the partisan Republicans. And so we arrive at yet

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another bizarre moment in the often perplexing political sociology of Washington: The political left and its friends in the establishment press are in a full embrace of the most illiberal and secretive component of the U.S. government.

A CIA spokesperson criticized the *Times* account of the memo, charging that Goss's words were "taken out of context." In fact, much of the rest of his statement conveyed the opposite point. "CIA is, of course, a part of the Executive Branch primarily as a capabilities component. We do not make policy, though we do inform those who make it. We avoid political involvement, especially political partisanship" (emphasis in the original).

The partisanship will continue. And so will the harsh, even personal, criticism of Goss and his team. The leaks against the new CIA leadership started even before they had begun to reform the place. But changes are coming.

"In the days and weeks ahead of us," Goss wrote, "I will announce a series of changes—some involving procedures, organization, senior personnel, and areas of focus for our action."

These changes are long overdue. And though you wouldn't know it from recent media coverage, many CIA officials support them. Goss is starting with the Directorate of Operations, the branch of the CIA responsible for clandestine collection of foreign intelligence. It's a good place to begin.

In all of the studies and commissions and debates about terrorists and rogue regimes and threats, we have learned one thing that should be the backdrop for every discussion of intelligence reform: The CIA failed to penetrate the senior-most levels of the former Iraqi regime or of al Qaeda. Former CIA director George Tenet has admitted this.

The clandestine service exists to penetrate our enemies and collect their secrets. Some armchair spooks pretend this is easy. It's not. But gaps in our knowledge are gaps in our security. Tenet told the 9/11 Commission it would take five years to revamp the clandestine services.

Faster, please. ♦

Permanent Minority Leader?

Harry Reid takes over from Tom Daschle.

BY MATTHEW CONTINETTI

SEARCHLIGHT, NEVADA, is a time-worn desert town of under 600 people about an hour south of Las Vegas. Its heyday was long ago, when the promise of gold attracted hard-rock miners to the area's brown and red hills. But what gold there was is now gone, and with it the miners, gamblers, prostitutes, and other frontier rogues. Today the town is desolate. The rusty hills sigh resignedly under the weight of mobile homes. Its time, one would think, has passed.

Yet Searchlight experienced a sort of renaissance last week, as the national press turned its attention toward the town's most famous native, Senator Harry Reid. On November 16, Senate Democrats elected Reid to the post of minority leader in the next Congress, which begins January 4. And the requisite newspaper, magazine, television, and radio profiles that followed all mentioned Reid's humble beginnings as the son of an alcoholic miner. His childhood home had no indoor plumbing; his elementary and middle school had two rooms; and his high school education was dependent on whether he could hitchhike each week to school in Henderson, 44 miles north of Searchlight.

These profiles did not escape the senator's attention. "There's been a lot written in the past couple of weeks about me and where I come from," he said at a press conference shortly after he was elected leader. He didn't sound surprised at this, which makes sense, because the person who talks the most about Harry Reid's childhood in Searchlight, Nevada, is . . . well, Harry Reid.

Around the same time he was talking to reporters, Sen. Reid's office sent out a press release with the headline "Reid to Bring Searchlight Values to Leadership Job." It quoted the senator as saying, "I want every American—from Searchlight to the big cities—to have the same opportunities I had, and more." And, indeed, he told reporters last week, "I think it's important here this morning that we talk just one more time about where I come from." Which he did—at length.

It is no exaggeration to say that Reid has built a mythology around his hometown, which he uses as a metaphor for the American dream. Six years ago, he wrote a book entitled *Searchlight: The Camp That Didn't Fail*, which he often reads from during Senate filibusters. And Reid built a house in Searchlight. "Most of the people I know, if they grew up in Searchlight, their big accomplishment is that they managed to get out," says Steve Sebelius, political columnist at the Las Vegas *Review-Journal*. "Not Reid. He constantly goes back to Searchlight. He always flies into Las Vegas, yet he always makes that extra drive."

Reid made that extra drive a few days before the election, and was at his home in Searchlight when he found out that Tom Daschle, the Senate minority leader, had lost his seat to Republican John Thune. Reid had been Daschle's deputy since 1998, and upon hearing news of his boss's defeat, he sprang into action. At 3 A.M., he called Daschle with condolences. At 6 A.M. he started calling his fellow Democratic senators to ask for their support, and by 8 A.M. he had

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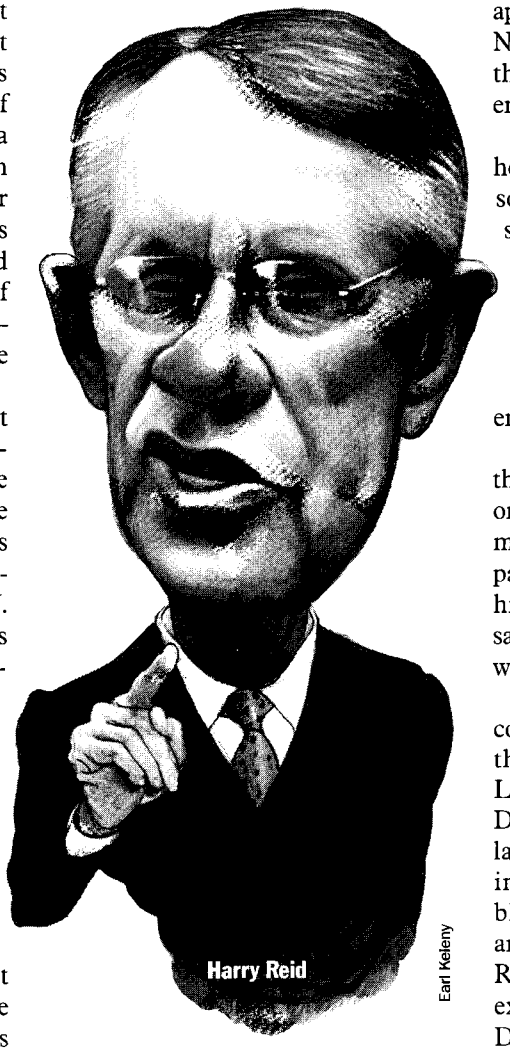
locked up the leadership post. Connecticut's Chris Dodd, who had toyed with the idea of running for minority leader, didn't have a chance. Reid's future was secure.

The Democrats' isn't. When Reid becomes minority leader next year, he will speak for only 44 senators, the lowest number of Democrats since the Great Depression. The 2004 election established that the Democrats are now a minority party: They not only lost the presidency; they lost seats in the Senate and the House as well. So the party has entered one of its introspective moods, and, like a brooding teenager, it is torn between self-loathing ("The leadership of our party has a cultural disconnect," says Kerry adviser Doug Sosnick) and paranoid fantasies ("The Accuracy of the Voting Results Are Questioned—and Should Be," reads a headline from the lefty website *Buzzflash.net*).

Maybe Reid can lead the party out of its funk. A canny behind-the-scenes operator, he is also a moderate —some say a conservative. For one thing, Reid's record on abortion is more, um, *nuanced* than most Democrats'. It's true that he supports U.N. efforts at population control, opposes the ban on funding for overseas abortions, and, before a bill's final passage, often votes for amendments that would weaken that bill's pro-life measures. But he's also voted for bans on partial-birth abortion. He's voted for the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, or Laci and Conner's Law. He's voted against resolutions in support of *Roe* v. *Wade*.

And there's more. Reid is against gun control. He cosponsored a Senate bill shielding gun manufacturers from lawsuits, and he opposed the assault-weapons ban. And, though he opposes the Federal Marriage Amendment, he's twice supported Nevada's statewide ban on same-sex marriage. Also, he cosponsored a constitutional amendment to ban flag-burning. Prominently displayed on his website is a picture of him shaking hands with Ronald Reagan. He voted for the 1991 Gulf War, for the second Iraq war, for the $87 billion earmarked for Iraqi and Afghan reconstruction. He is a convert to Mormonism who is passionate about his faith. And he's a teetotaler.

On things like taxes, affirmative action, and the environment, Reid is more of a mainstream Democrat. But look at him closely, and it is clear that Reid has more in common with Joe Lieberman than with Nancy Pelosi. The problem is that, unfortunately for Reid, one of the things he shares with Lieberman is a soporific public persona. Reid's voice is quiet and his appearance plain. He blends easily into the crowd; he might be taken for the man in the gray flannel suit's shorter, quieter second cousin.


Harry Reid

Earl Keleny

Joe McCullough, a distinguished professor of English at the University of Nevada Las Vegas who has known Reid for 20 years, puts it more charitably: "Harry's not charismatic, but he comes across as being extremely genuine. He's soft-spoken. He's not going to be like Daschle." Others are less charitable. Sebelius, the political columnist, says Reid is "as dry as the martinis he never drinks." And the liberal columnist Molly Ivins wrote recently that Reid is "charismatically challenged."

The senator himself is aware of this. Shortly after Election Day, he appeared at a photo-opportunity with Nancy Pelosi and John Kerry. The three waved and smiled for the cameras. Then Reid told a story.

"I talked to Senator Byrd today," he said lightheartedly. "He said he got some paper in Nevada calling. He says, 'I'm going to say nice things about you.' But, he says, 'If they ask me, I'm going to tell them we have one complaint about you.'

"I said, 'What is that, Robert?'

"He says, 'He never talks loud enough.'"

Still, those who have watched Reid the longest insist that beneath the colorless demeanor is a calculating, savvy mind, and a knowledgeable, talented partisan. "They probably have to turn his mike up to hear what he's saying," says Sebelius, "but what he's saying is worth listening to."

Once the mike is turned up, of course, you are bound to hear something about Searchlight, Nevada. Like this, from Reid's speech to the Democratic National Convention last July: "On the wall of our home in Searchlight, my mother hung a blue pillowcase with yellow fringe and stitching of a quote by President Roosevelt," Reid told the crowd, explaining how he came to be a Democrat. "I can still see his words on the wall of our home: *We can. We will. We must.*"

A lot has happened since the Boston convention. What Reid didn't know at the time was that, on Election Day, President Bush would carry Searchlight, Nevada, by 87 votes. Doesn't sound like much. But then, when only 423 people show up at the polls, 87 votes make for a margin of 20 points. George W. Bush won Searchlight in a landslide. ♦

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Now You Don't Tell Us

What the CIA's bin Laden expert used to say about Iraq's al Qaeda ties. BY THOMAS JOSCELYN

ON NOVEMBER 14, *60 Minutes* aired a segment with Michael Scheuer, who made headlines after resigning from the CIA to pursue his second career as a critic of the war on terror and the war in Iraq. Scheuer was the head of the CIA's bin Laden unit (codenamed "Alec") from 1996 to 1999. With the publication this past summer of his "anonymous" book *Imperial Hubris*, he became a media star, giving countless interviews as "one of the CIA's foremost authorities on Osama bin Laden." Out of government, he appears poised to become a regular pundit. His appearance on *60 Minutes* was followed two days later by appearances on Chris Matthews's *Hardball* on MSNBC and Aaron Brown's *NewsNight* on CNN.

During his appearance on *60 Minutes* (and his follow-up interviews), Scheuer warned that al Qaeda's detonating a weapon of mass destruction on American soil was "pretty close to being inevitable." When asked what type of weapon al Qaeda could detonate, Scheuer responded that it would be "a nuclear weapon of some dimension, whether it's actually a nuclear weapon, or a dirty bomb, or some kind of radiological device . . . it's probably a near thing."

Such dire predictions call to mind warnings that both Presidents Clinton and Bush have made about the dangers of WMD in the hands of terrorists. Scheuer says also that within the first year of the "Alec" unit's existence, he learned that bin Laden and al Qaeda "were involved in an extraordinarily sophisticated and professional effort to acquire weapons of mass destruction. In this case, nuclear material, so by the end of 1996, it was clear that this was an organization unlike any other one we had ever seen."

Did bin Laden receive any outside assistance in his effort to acquire a nuclear capability? Scheuer did not say. Nor did *60 Minutes* correspondent Steve Kroft or any of the other interviewers ask.

But Scheuer did consider this question two years ago, and his answer was yes, bin Laden did receive outside help—from Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Does Scheuer agree with the case for the war in Iraq more than he is letting on?

Scheuer's 2002 book, *Through Our Enemies' Eyes* offered startling conclusions regarding Saddam Hussein's willingness to assist al Qaeda's effort to obtain nuclear weapons. "In pursuing tactical nuclear weapons, bin Laden has focused on the FSU [Former Soviet Union] states and has sought and received help from Iraq," wrote Scheuer. In fact, bin Laden's "first moves in this direction were made in cooperation with NIF [Sudan's National Islamic Front] leaders, Iraq's intelligence service, and Iraqi CBRN [chemical-biological-radiological-nuclear] scientists and technicians."

Through Our Enemies' Eyes pointed to evidence indicating a relationship between Saddam's Iraq and al Qaeda beginning in the early 1990s. And "there is information," Scheuer wrote, "showing that in the 1993-1994 period bin Laden began work with Sudan and Iraq to acquire a CBRN capability for al Qaeda."

These efforts were far-reaching, according to Scheuer, who cited open-source reporting and other evidence—mostly from the late 1990s—to support the claim that Iraq and al Qaeda cooperated on multiple projects. Areas of cooperation included everything from assistance in the development of chemical and biological weapons facilities in Sudan and Afghanistan, to the possible training of al Qaeda operatives at Mujahedeen Khalq training camps in Iraq starting in June 1998 (the "MEK" was an anti-Iranian terrorist group sponsored by Saddam), to the possibility that MEK operatives (under Saddam's direction) provided "technical and military training for the Taliban's forces" as well as "running the Taliban's anti-Iran propaganda."

In *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, Scheuer also reported on bin Laden's relationship with the former deputy director of Iraq's intelligence service, Faruq Hijazi. Scheuer approvingly cited evidence of meetings between bin Laden and Hijazi, whom Saddam made responsible for "nurturing Iraq's ties to [Islamic] fundamentalist warriors," in June 1994 and again in December 1998. During their first meeting in Sudan, Scheuer wrote, Hijazi and bin Laden "developed a good rapport that would 'flourish' in the late 1990s." Hijazi was not a low-level flunky; he was one of Saddam's most trusted intelligence operatives.

A close relationship between Hijazi and bin Laden suggests there is far more to the relationship between Saddam's Iraq and al Qaeda than the president's critics would have Americans believe. Curiously, it now seems as if Scheuer himself has forgotten the evidence of a relationship between Saddam's Iraq and al Qaeda that he cited just two years ago. Consider the following exchange with Chris Matthews on November 16:

> SCHEUER: The only part of that I know about, sir, is that the—I happened to do the research on the links between al Qaeda and Iraq.
> MATTHEWS: And what did you come up with?
> SCHEUER: Nothing.

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Nothing? That's not the story Scheuer tells on, for example, pages 124-125, 184, 188-190, and 192 of *Through Our Enemies' Eyes.*

Commentators such as Matthews use Scheuer's words to undermine justifications for the war in Iraq. Consider Matthews's comments toward the end of his interview, "I hate to think what history is going to say about this war. They're going to say there was [no] WMD, because we know that. They're going to say there was no connection to al Qaeda, because we know that now."

But was there, according to Scheuer, really "no connection" between Iraq and al Qaeda? Or is Matthews simply unaware that Scheuer's newfound skepticism directly contradicts his research on this topic published just two years ago?

In his recent interviews, Scheuer stresses that the possibility of an attack using a nuclear device or another weapon of mass destruction is now greatly heightened. But absent from his talking points is any mention that bin Laden's longstanding pursuit of these weapons was aided by Saddam Hussein's Iraq. Of course, if Scheuer openly discussed the evidence of Iraq's collaboration with al Qaeda that he cited in *Through Our Enemies' Eyes*, many would likely disagree with his characterization of the Iraq war as an "avaricious, premeditated, unprovoked" war and a "Christmas present" for bin Laden. They would also probably disagree with Matthews's assertion that there was "no connection" between Iraq and al Qaeda.

Perhaps in the months leading up to the Iraq war, the Bush administration should have cited *Through Our Enemies' Eyes* as a source for its claim that there was a relationship between Saddam's Iraq and bin Laden's al Qaeda. They might have quoted the passage in which Scheuer, scourge of the Bush administration, wrote, "We know for certain that bin Laden was seeking CBRN weapons . . . and that Iraq and Sudan have been cooperating with bin Laden on CBRN weapon acquisition and development." ♦

A Bigger, Badder, Better Army

How to build the military needed for the Bush Doctrine. BY TOM DONNELLY & VANCE SERCHUK

AT THE HEART of this fall's presidential campaign was a policy debate about the meaning of the "global war on terror." Is it, as George W. Bush came to understand, a struggle for the political future of the greater Middle East—a contest between liberalism and radical Islam to supplant the crumbling autocracies that have dominated the region since the fall of the Ottoman Empire? Or is it, as John Kerry claimed, a narrower mission—to roll back al Qaeda, a fringe movement whose members can be tracked down, captured, or killed, and thus restore the pre-9/11 status quo?

The president's electoral victory on November 2 did not settle this argument, but it gave him a new opportunity to prove his case. Ultimately, a second Bush administration must convince Americans and the world that a tolerant, democratic Middle East is not a desert mirage, but a winnable prospect. And real success must be achieved both in and beyond Afghanistan and Iraq.

The next steps toward the transformation of the Islamic world must be taken here at home, with the transformation of our national security establishment. This is the central challenge for the second Bush administration. If the United States is to succeed in spurring the emergence of a different kind of Middle East, it must also create a different kind of military. And for that, it must redefine defense transformation to meet the geopolitical challenges we face, not simply to harness the technological opportunities before us.

This gap between our strategic ends and our military means must be addressed in four major areas.

¶ **More ground troops.** As of mid-November, approximately 180,000 reservists and national guardsmen are mobilized, of whom 154,000 are U.S. Army. They supplement an active Army force set by law at 480,000, but "temporarily" expanded to a little over 500,000. In total, then, there are about 650,000 soldiers actively in service.

For reasons that are hard to fathom, there is still a debate in the Pentagon about whether this requirement for ground forces is an Iraq-driven anomaly or a reflection of the "long, hard slog" that is the global war on terror. The answer ought to be obvious. Even if, in the next year, it proves possible to reduce the number of troops in Iraq, the need for larger land forces won't end. It's the nature of this war.

That's hard for Americans to accept. We have always put great faith in the notion that technology and firepower can substitute for human capital; that "it's better to send a bullet than a man." And while there's no question that extraordinary efficiencies and effects have been wrung from the Pentagon's emphasis on speed, precision, and coordination, it's also true that the open-ended, low-level counterinsurgencies that increasingly are the operational reality of the global war on terror are manpower-intensive. Technology can help—and greater efforts should be made to develop devices that can counter the "impro-

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vised explosive devices," suicide bombs, and car bombs favored by Islamic insurgents—but it cannot solve the problem.

That's because progress in these conflicts is predicated on more than lobbing precision-guided weapons at terrorists. Rather, making the greater Middle East part of the global liberal order depends on the U.S. military's ability to provide a measure of security for local populations, rally their support, and mobilize them to fight alongside us.

But as always in history, patrolling the frontier is a job for regulars. It has been a revelation to military personnel wonks that reservists have been willing to sign up for repeat duty on the merciless missions they've been given in Iraq, but this can't go on forever. This year the Army failed to achieve its reserve recruiting goals, a worrisome sign. Relying on citizen soldiers as an "operational" reserve all but obliterates the distinction between reservists and regulars. It also deprives the military of a true strategic reserve to mobilize in times of unanticipated crisis, such as could develop in North Korea, Iran, or other trouble spots.

Further, regulars are the most effective tool for training and organizing local forces that will ultimately safeguard and legitimize the new governments in Kabul and Baghdad. It's not simply that the new Afghan and Iraqi armies and police must learn their trade. They need an institutional model of how a military serves a free society. And they need a reliable, long-term partner. It is said that al Qaeda has "franchised" jihad; we need to franchise its opposite in counterterrorism.

Finally, excessive reliance on reservists is the most expensive way to man the force; reservists are only cheap until they're called to active duty, trained, and paid at full-time rates. The arithmetic and logic of force projection are unforgiving. For every unit rotated abroad, some percentage will be unable to deploy, for a host of reasons. This is true for active units, but more so for reserve units—and the latter are more likely to be "under strength" to begin with.

Reservists also require extra training. While many are more professionally qualified in the kinds of skills needed for stability or reconstruction operations, they are often rusty in basic soldier and combat training. And in Iraq and Afghanistan, these are essential for survival.

The additional costs associated with reliance on reservists have been masked thus far by the budgetary games used to pay for the war through "emergency" supplemental appropriations. But the costs are nonetheless real and great. Steven Kosiak of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments has calculated that strictly *military* spending on Iraq will total about $166 billion by the end of the 2005 fiscal year. The bulk is eaten by personnel bills.

The additional costs associated with relying on reserves have been masked thus far by budgetary games, but those costs are great.

This systemic problem is going to require a systemic solution and an alteration in the Defense Department's long-range program. Even if the Pentagon were to attempt to grow the active-duty Army by 100,000 soldiers, it would have a force far below the 780,000-man standard of the late Cold War, though possibly one large enough for the challenges ahead.

¶ **New bases overseas.** Much to its credit, the Bush administration has tackled the problem of the anachronistic U.S. global force posture inherited from the Cold War. Rather than a ring of static defenses in Western Europe and Northeast Asia to guard against Soviet aggression, the global war on terror requires the realignment of America's overseas bases into a network of expeditionary "frontier forts," geared toward projecting power into terrorist redoubts across the greater Middle East.

President Bush announced the broad contours of his rebasing plan in August, promising to redeploy 60,000 to 70,000 troops over the next decade. John Kerry's attempt to make political hay over the issue fell flat—in part because the Democratic nominee had supported the plan before he opposed it, but mainly because the president's plan makes irrefutable sense.

However, the good work done is at risk, for two reasons. First, it may fall victim to domestic politics. The details of the rebasing plan are still under review and likely won't be released until 2005—coincident with the next round of the notorious "base realignment and closure" process, or "BRAC" in Pentagonese. This will be a remorseless political knife fight, with members of Congress defending home-state facilities to the death. Spending money on airfields in Romania and training centers in Australia is strategically smart, but won't be well received on Capitol Hill when American bases are on the Pentagon's hit list.

Second, the Pentagon's rebasing proposals themselves may not go far enough, as America's security perimeter is expanding faster in several key regions than the new plan acknowledges. For example, a considerable focus of the U.S. European Command is now the northwestern quadrant of Africa. This reflects concerns about the region's potential as a terrorist safe haven—with its nexus of weak governments, porous borders, and large Muslim populations—but also the increasing importance of oil from the Gulf of Guinea. While experts debate how large a share of U.S. imports will ultimately come from Africa, the figure is already about one-sixth and rising. Although the Pentagon may accept a marginal increase in the U.S. military presence in this region, its overall footprint is likely to remain insufficient to the challenges ahead.

Even more worrisome, American force posture remains dangerously thin in the arc—many thousands of

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miles long—between Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean and Okinawa and Guam in the Pacific. Although there is hope of securing a basing arrangement with Canberra for a site or sites in northern Australia, the multiple national security threats in the Asia-Pacific region—from the potential destabilization of Pakistan or Indonesia by radical Islam to Chinese military aggression against Taiwan—argue for a more robust deployment of American land forces in the region.

¶ **New alliances.** Overhauling the structure of our international relations is almost as important as overhauling the structure of our overseas base network; indeed, the two are intrinsically linked. More than a temporary coalition of the willing, the Bush administration now needs to develop enduring alliances and organizations for the global war on terror that it can pass on to its successors, be they Democratic or Republican. In short, it needs a coalition of the committed.

This argument should not be confused with John Kerry's nostalgia for an international system that never existed—one in which power is somehow parceled out on an equal basis between Washington and select capitals of yesterday's great powers. There's no walking away from the fact of American hegemony. The question, rather, is how best to institutionalize, legitimize, and thus deepen it. What Harry Truman did for the Cold War, George W. Bush needs to do for the war on terror.

In imagining a framework for the future, it is important to distinguish between the cosmetic and the real. For all intents and purposes, the United States will continue to contribute the lion's share of blood and treasure in the effort to transform the greater Middle East, just as it did toward the effort to contain Soviet communism. However, even the *appearance* of burden-sharing is valuable—if only because it will make the American people more willing to bear the considerable costs of the struggle ahead, and other democracies more invested in our collective effort. The international institutions and alliances of the Cold War were worthwhile precisely because they codified American hegemony across the non-Communist world, though under a multilateral veneer. What a less powerful America was capable of accomplishing in 1949, a more powerful America should be capable of doing in 2005.

In the case of Europe, there is some hope that, faced with four more years of the Bush administration, a measure of transatlantic cooperation can be reclaimed. The recent comments of NATO chief Jaap de Hoop Scheffer are encouraging, especially his recognition that if the transatlantic capabilities gap "is to be bridged, it has to be done from the European side and not from the United States."

Ultimately, however, an amicable transatlantic relationship will require a hardheaded appraisal of where we have mutual interests and complementary capabilities and where we don't. Americans might focus this dialogue on the stabilization and democratization of regions of strategic importance in Europe's backyard—the Balkans, the Black Sea littoral, and North Africa.

But the U.S. effort to expand our alliances must cast a global net. Even as the Bush administration tries to work with European partners, it should attach equal if not superior strategic value to the great democracies of the Asia-Pacific region—Japan, Australia, and, arguably most important, India.

The continued domestic transformation of India and its decisive entry into an American-led counterterrorism coalition could represent one of the most significant strategic goals for the next four years. Already India offers a model of a prosperous, multicultural state in which democracy and Islam coexist—indeed, India, with its nearly 130 million Muslims, is the third largest "Muslim country" on Earth. New Delhi also has a large, professional military force at a time when most Western countries are tapped out of troops.

¶ **More money.** There's no getting around this one: It's impossible to have a Bush Doctrine world with Clinton-era defense budgets. The problem for the United States is not imperial overstretch, it's trying to run the planet on the cheap.

Measuring military spending over time is a very tricky art; the U.S. economy is extraordinarily dynamic, and the relative values of capital and manpower are forever in flux. Depending on your yardstick, it's possible to argue that defense budgets are larger or smaller than they were during the Cold War. The 2005 baseline defense-budget request was $400 billion. But as a proportion of gross domestic product, and even factoring in all the emergency supplemental spending, we are still giving less than a nickel of every dollar of our gross domestic product to defend ourselves.

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Moreover, the larger, yet still professional, military force we so plainly need is inevitably expensive. The cost of labor, including of course the cost of health care, remains high. In war as in business, machines are cheaper than men.

Nor can enough money be harvested from efficiencies; "turning the Pentagon into a triangle" is a slick slogan but a sticky policy prescription. Nor will gutting unnecessary weapons programs alone do the trick. John Kerry's campaign promise to pay for a larger Army by cutting missile defense made neither strategic nor budgetary sense.

The Bush administration's defense spending plan provided increases of 9 percent and 6 percent in the first two years of the first term, but then no further growth; baseline military spending is to remain flat. The same Pentagon that relies on reserves to meet its personnel needs still appears to believe that the costs of Middle East operations are a temporary burden to be dealt with through supplemental appropriations.

Creating the force we need for the many missions we've given our military in the Middle East and around the globe will require between 5 percent and 6 percent of GDP. That's $500 billion to $600 billion a year, and it needs to be sustained for the foreseeable future. It's a lot of money—and it will take a lot of political courage to ask for it. But that is the price of preserving Pax Americana.

These four needs will be met only if President Bush decides to spend some of the political capital he earned in the election. And whether he will choose to do so is not self-evident. In his first months in office, before 9/11, he preferred tax cuts to military spending.

Even now many Republicans would rather emphasize a domestic agenda, reforming the tax code or entitlements, than this burdensome war. But Americans elected George W. Bush to continue as commander in chief. The next few months will determine whether he intends to secure the wherewithal to finish the job. ♦

Tear Down This Tyranny

A Korea strategy for Bush's second term.

BY NICHOLAS EBERSTADT

THE BUSH ADMINISTRATION is not famous for patience with its critics. But for the sake of national security, the new Bush team should listen to constructive criticism of its policies—in particular, its policy for the North Korean nuclear crisis. The current U.S. approach to the North Korea problem is demonstrably flawed; arguably, even dangerously flawed.

Just what is wrong? After nearly four years in office, the curious fact remains that the Bush administration plainly lacks a strategy for dealing with the North Korean regime. Instead, it merely confronts Pyongyang with an attitude.

President Bush and his inner circle regard Kim Jong Il and his system with an admixture of loathing, contempt, and distrust—as well they might. Unfortunately, a mechanism for translating that point of view into effective action was manifestly absent from the statecraft of Bush's first-term administration. Long on attitude ("axis of evil") but short on strategy, the administration on North Korea was at times akin to a rudderless boat on an open sea.

Without rehearsing every detail, we might say that we have seen the Bush North Korea policy in "shocked by events" mode; we have seen it in "reactive" mode; we have seen it in "passive-aggressive" mode; and we have seen it in "paralyzed by infighting" mode. But we have yet to see it in "making bigger problems into smaller ones" mode.

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A better approach for the second term might start with two strategic precepts:

Precept One: We are exceedingly unlikely to talk—or to bribe—the current North Korean government out of its nuclear quest. Talk and bribery have been tried for nearly 15 years—with miserable results. If Kim Jong Il ever could have been talked or bribed out of his nuclear program, the world's best opportunity was probably during the mid-1990s, when the nation was starving, and the regime's survival looked very much in doubt. We all know how the Clinton team's "denuclearization" deals in that era turned out: Pyongyang took the money, and plowed it into new covert nuclear programs.

Precept Two: The North Korean nuclear crisis is the North Korean government—and the North Korean government is the North Korean nuclear crisis. Unless and until we have a better class of dictator running North Korea, we will be faced with an ongoing and indeed growing North Korean nuclear crisis. Pretending otherwise is a sure recipe for an even more dangerous situation.

Embracing those precepts would have immediate implications for American North Korea policy. Here are a few of the things a successful policy will require:

(1) Instituting regime change—at the State Department. If any doubt remained whether the first-term diplomatic team was up to the challenge of North Korea policy, it was removed by Secretary Colin Powell's hapless trip through East Asia last month, when he was publicly blindsided in both Beijing and Seoul by our putative partners in the Six Party

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Talks. North Korea is one of the most serious problems America faces today; our diplomatic crew needs to understand the threat.

(2) Defining "success" and "failure" for North Korea negotiations. To date, the Six Party Talks on North Korean denuclearization have produced—well, talk; meanwhile, North Korea has been racing to build up its nuclear arsenal. This perverse dynamic should be utterly unacceptable. For upcoming parlays, Washington needs to spell out clearly and in advance the outcomes that will constitute success, and those that amount to failure. And the administration must not be shy about declaring the process a failure if in fact it is.

(3) Increasing China's "ownership" of the North Korean problem. Thus far, Beijing has very successfully hedged the North Korean crisis—sometimes affecting to be part of the solution, other times directly contributing to the problem. Washington has been far too complacent about China's unprincipled ambiguity. After all: China will bear high costs if the current denuclearization diplomacy fails—and even greater dangers lie in store for Beijing if Pyongyang becomes a full-fledged nuclear power. Our cooperation with China will be more productive once we understand this. And once Beijing is obliged to think clearly about its own interests in North Korea threat reduction, we can expect a more forceful and consistent Chinese focus on the Kim Jong Il regime.

(4) Working around the pro-appeasement crowd in the South Korean government. U.S. policy on the North Korean crisis suffered a setback, and a serious one, with the December 2002 South Korean presidential election, thanks to which a coterie of New Left-style academics and activists assumed great influence over their government's security policies. Despite placid assurances from "old Korea hands" in the State Department and elsewhere that this crew would "mellow" in office, the core of this new government (a cadre dubbed "the Taliban" by the South Korean press) has remained implacably anti-American and reflexively pro-appeasement toward Pyongyang. (Last week, for example, South Korea's president publicly averred that both military and *economic* pressure were off the table as instruments for resolving the North Korean nuclear crisis; a few days later the South Korean Defense Ministry made the breathtaking announcement that North Korea would no longer be designated as the "primary enemy" facing its military forces.)

For all intents and purposes, South Korea is now a runaway ally: a country bordering a state committed to its destruction, and yet governed increasingly in accordance with graduate-school "peace studies" desiderata—while at the same time relying on forward-positioned American troops and a security treaty with Washington to guarantee its safety. It is not too much to describe this utterly unnatural and unviable situation as our "second crisis" on the Korean peninsula.

The simultaneous task of salvaging the Washington-Seoul alliance while avoiding "Taliban" sabotage of a North Korea threat-reduction policy presents exceptional—indeed, extraordinary—challenges to U.S. statecraft. But not insurmountable ones. Over the past decade, some giant South Korean conglomerates that once boasted they were "too big to fail" have completely disappeared from the corporate scene. Everyone in South Korea today remembers this—so they can also intuit the hollowness of their current president's strange claim just last week that the U.S.-South Korean relationship is likewise too big to fail. Public opinion in South Korea is deeply—and quite evenly—divided on the North Korea question, and the current government earns consistently low approval ratings. Instead of appeasing South Korea's appeasers (as our policy to date has attempted to do, albeit clumsily) America should be speaking over their heads directly to the Korean people, building and nurturing the coalitions in South Korean domestic politics that will ultimately bring a prodigal ally back into the fold.

(5) Readying the nondiplomatic instruments for North Korea threat reduction. Diplomacy on the North Korean nuclear front may well fail—in which case a variety of nondiplomatic alternatives must be at the ready. Paradoxically, however, preparing for the deliberate use of nonconsensual, non-diplomatic options with North Korea will actually increase the probability of a diplomatic success.

(6) Planning for a post-Communist Korean peninsula. For far too long, policymakers in the United States and elsewhere have acted as if contemplating the practical implications of the Kim Jong Il regime's demise were somehow "thinking the unthinkable." Instead, American policy should be actively engaged in planning for a successful transition to a post-Kim Jong Il Korea—and in coordinating with allies and other interested parties to maximize the opportunities and minimize the risks in that delicate and potentially dangerous process. Many uncertainties lie in store on the road to a free, democratic, non-nuclear, and united Korean peninsula, but there can be absolutely no doubt that such a destination is the very best objective—not only for the Korean people but for all their neighbors as well.

As President Bush contemplates North Korea policy for a second term, he could do worse than to dwell on his legacy. During the presidential campaign, John Kerry asserted that the North Korea problem was worse now than four years ago—and he was right. (Kerry's own clueless prescription—to seek and cut a bilateral deal with Kim Jong Il—does not invalidate the diagnosis.)

Most people in the present administration judge the Clinton administration harshly for bequeathing to posterity a more serious international terrorist threat than it inherited—and rightly so. If North Korea's threat to America is greater four years from now than today, that will be a Bush administration legacy. And history is unlikely to judge such a legacy kindly. ♦

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Bush's European Itinerary

Where he should really go.

BY GERARD BAKER

THOUGH PUBLIC REACTION in Europe to President Bush's reelection this month was predictably outraged, grief-stricken, and generally dumbfounded, it wasn't hard to detect behind the mask of uncomprehending disapproval a smug half-smile of self-satisfaction. Deep down, European political and media elites must have been delighted that their instinctual prejudices about the world had been confirmed in such spectacular fashion.

The ignorant voters of America had, by a decisive majority, chosen to reject the enlightened entreaties of the sophisticated leaders of Europe and reelect that halfwit cowboy bent on wiping out humanity in pursuit of American power and Middle Eastern oil.

What more proof did clever, rationalist Europeans need of the effortless superiority of their culture, political institutions, and way of life over a nation of Bible-reading, foreigner-hating, fundamentalist rednecks than this stunning election result?

"How can 59,000,000 people be so dumb?" screamed the front page of London's *Daily Mirror*. North America had divided into two, according to a cartoon in a German magazine—the civilized northern and bicoastal United States and "Jesusland," the theocracy now represented by the vast swath of red-state America.

Colin Powell's announced departure from the State Department merely confirmed the master European narrative. The last urbane, multilateralist man of peace in the Bush administration had been cast aside to better ensure that the bigoted, war-loving instincts of the American people could now be given free, full-throated expression.

The left and right in much of Europe agreed. America could no longer be seen as a civilized country: It had become an alien, medieval sort of place. Europe should put even more effort now into building its own secularist, enlightened nirvana as a beacon of hope to the world.

President Jacques Chirac of France, on a state visit to London last week, seized on President Bush's reelection to return to his theme of the need for Europe to unite around a vision (his vision) of an alternative to American power and influence in the world.

This followed his decision to snub Ayad Allawi, the interim Iraqi prime minister, at a European summit meeting last month where he chose instead to caucus with the German and Spanish leaders in an effort to begin building the European alternative to the United States.

It is a shame that Europeans were paying so much attention to interpreting developments on this side of the Atlantic because they seem to have missed a remarkable series of potentially more significant events in their own backyard, events that say much more about the real divergence between Europe and America, events that point in a disturbing, dark direction for the peoples of the old continent.

Take the Buttiglione affair. A couple of days before the U.S. election, the European parliament, an institution with zero popular legitimacy but growing political powers in the European Union, forced the resignation of the entire European Commission, the executive leadership of the Brussels bureaucracy, because a majority of the parliament's members objected to the religious views of the Italian nominee.

Rocco Buttiglione, a highly regarded conservative, who also happens to be that rare thing in European public life, a devout, churchgoing Catholic, caused an outrage when he told reporters that he agreed with his church's basic teachings on homosexuality, the sanctity of marriage, and abortion. As the proposed justice commissioner, Buttiglione made it clear his own religious views could not and would not affect his capacity to enforce European law. But for the European parliament's politically correct majority, that was not enough.

The liberal elites in Europe, who share the same basic characteristic of their American counterparts, that is, a willingness to tolerate anything except those who disagree with their own view, rose up as one to reject Buttiglione. When the new commission was named, Buttiglione's name had been dropped.

A few days later, on the very day Americans were going to the polls, the Dutch filmmaker Theo van Gogh was murdered on the streets of Amsterdam. As Christopher Caldwell documented in this magazine a week ago, van Gogh was killed by an Islamist militant who objected to the filmmaker's portrayal of the abusive treatment of women in some Muslim countries.

The reaction in the Netherlands to the murder was almost as troubling as the murder itself. Mosques were firebombed, the country's large, mostly Muslim, immigrant population was under siege. But at the same time the authorities demonstrated how inert European leadership has become in dealing with the terrorist threat at home and abroad—playing down the significance of the killing as a terrorist act. Much of the commentary in Europe focused on van Gogh's sins in inflaming radical Muslim opinion.

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Later that same week a Belgian court handed down a ruling that in effect banned the largest political party in the Flemish half of the country. The Vlaams Blok, a nationalist party with some unedifying views on immigration, is nonetheless a serious and respectable political party that favors secession for Flanders from Belgium, and is deeply hostile to Brussels, both in its national and its Europe-wide roles as seat of government. So the courts ruled that it was a racist organization and no longer eligible for public funds or access to state-run television.

Then last week, in Antwerp, in the latest example of rising anti-Semitic rage in Europe, a young Jewish man was murdered. Once again, while the authorities tried to play down the ethnic dimension of the murder, the condemnation was tempered by the search for a deeper reason. Coincidentally, the murder happened the same week that the United Nations, in a new report on anti-Semitic violence that attracted much favorable attention in Europe, suggested Israel's policies were stoking anti-Jewish hatred.

Also last week, at a "friendly" soccer match in Madrid between England and Spain, thousands of Spanish fans chanted obscene racist taunts at two black English players throughout the game. The abuse was so fierce that the referee and the England coach considered abandoning the game but carried on gallantly despite the torrent of bigotry.

These apparently unconnected events ought to force Europeans to look a bit harder at the decay in their own societies. Even as the authorities go to absurd lengths to justify politically correct tolerance of those intent on destroying the very foundations of free societies; even as they seek, by contrast, to eliminate traditional Christian values and principles from European public discourse; even as they try to block American attempts to bring about a better, more enlightened, world for the people of Iraq and the broader Middle East, their own society is sliding steadily into an ugly maelstrom of intolerance, fear, and hatred.

President Bush has said he will travel to Europe early in his new administration to mend fences with European allies. He should. Continuing difficulties in Iraq and the need for toughness with Iran may require more cooperation with the truculent governments of Europe.

But President Bush might also take the opportunity to bring the Europeans a few lessons from America. His itinerary is not yet confirmed, but here are a few suggestions.

He should visit the site of Theo van Gogh's murder and say what so few Europeans have been willing to say about it—that it was a brutal act of religious and political intolerance that reflects the broader struggle of free societies against the new totalitarianism of Islamofascism.

The president could go to Belgium and meet with the leaders of the Vlaams Blok and reaffirm America's belief in freedom of speech and organization around the world.

He should certainly find time to visit Rome and reassure Signor Buttiglione and his supporters that he, too, understands the importance of the struggle for human dignity, and the virtues of the family and morality in public life. He might also want to stop by the European parliament in Brussels and deliver the same message there.

He could then go to Antwerp, or better still to Paris, and warn Europeans not to turn a blind eye to resurgent anti-Semitism.

And if he has the time he might take in a football game in Spain and show the fans there the basic decency and respect for others that America alone these days seems intent on demonstrating to the world.

Then he should get on with the difficult but ultimately glorious task of bringing the hope of freedom, tolerance, and dignity to parts of the world where it is absent, with or without Europe at his side. ♦

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"One Land for Two Peoples"

Is it a solution to the Arab/Israeli conflict or a recipe for disaster?

For decades, the declared thrust of the Palestinians has been their desire of having their own state – in Judea/Samaria (the "West Bank") and in the Gaza Strip. Now, a new idea has taken hold and is propagated in national media: a binational state, encompassing those territories and "Israel proper." The slogan is "One Land for Two Peoples."

What are the facts?

Review of history: The Arabs have launched four major wars against Israel, at the end of which Israel remained in possession of all the lands west of the Jordan River, the undivided city of Jerusalem, the vast Sinai, the Golan Heights and the Gaza Strip. In what was in all likelihood a major act of folly, but in order to attain peace with Egypt, Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt. But the peace with Egypt is the coldest imaginable.

Thus, having been unable to defeat Israel in war and unable to wear it down by their "intifadas," the Arabs had to think up something new in order to destroy Israel. And they did indeed come up with something. According to Yasser Arafat, the most important weapon of the Arabs is the "Arab womb," the motto being: "If we can't defeat them in war, let's outbreed them." And that is exactly what would happen if there ever were a "binational" state. There can be little doubt that, within a generation or less, the Arabs would have outbred their Jewish fellow citizens and would have become the majority in the country. They would thus have accomplished what they were unable to attain by any other means, namely the destruction of the Jewish state.

> "The Palestinians, just as the over one million Arabs now living in Israel with full rights as citizens, could be part of Israel, with full autonomy and with their own internal governance..."

Artificial countries: With the exception of Egypt, all the countries of the Middle East are artificial creations. After World War I, England and France carved up the Ottoman Empire, with England retaining what are now Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel and Iraq, and France being in possession of what are now Syria and Lebanon.

In 1917, the Balfour Declaration, proclaimed by the British mandatory power, established all of Palestine – east and west of the Jordan River – as the reconstituted homeland for the Jewish people. This was ratified by the 52 countries of the League of Nations. Insistence that these are Arab lands and that the Jews are "occupiers" is a notion that has been repeated so often and for so long that most of the world has come to believe it. But it has no basis in fact at all. It is a myth.

If Israel were ever to consent to the creation of a binational state, how would it work out? To get the answer, one only needs to go next door to Lebanon. In order to provide a safe haven for the Maronite Christians, the French carved out the artificial state of Lebanon. Within just one generation, the population ratio had begun to change in favor of the Moslems. Strife broke out, which ultimately culminated in a bloody civil war that lasted for close to ten years and in which scores of thousands died. Can anybody really believe that, given the mortal hatred of the Moslems against the Jews, things would be any different in Israel/Palestine? Of course not! A bloody civil war would be the inevitable result.

Created as a Jewish state: Israel was created as a Jewish state by the will of the nations of the world and by the brain and brawn of the Jewish people. There is no reason why the Israelis would turn their country over to those who are their declared mortal enemies. Do the Turks plan to establish a binational state with the Kurds (or do the Iranians or Iraqis, for that matter)? Do the Spaniards consider a binational state with the Basques? Do the Chinese propose the formation of a binational state with the Tibetans? Of course not. Why, therefore, should Israel even consider sharing its country with those whose never-changing agenda is its destruction? Why should Israel, one of the most advanced countries in the world in virtually every field of endeavor, make itself hostage to those who live in backwardness and ignorance and who are guided by religious fanaticism? Israel was founded to be the Jewish homeland and it will never acquiesce to its own destruction by allowing itself to become a binational state.

A binational state is a non-starter and, realistically, a Palestinian state in any portion of Judea/Samaria and Gaza (even in the unlikely case that the Israelis were ever willing to concede it) would not be viable. What then is the possible solution to this enduring problem? The Palestinians, just as the over one million Arabs now living in Israel with full rights as citizens, could be part of Israel, with full autonomy and with their own internal governance (something that the Kurds would give anything to attain). If they were unhappy with that solution they would be at liberty to migrate to any of the over twenty Arab countries that, one would hope, would welcome them with open arms.

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Taxes, Social Security & the Politics of Reform

A Reaganite plan for Reagan's heirs

By John D. Mueller

By putting income-tax and Social Security reform atop his second-term domestic agenda, President George W. Bush courageously zeroed in on the two most important fiscal issues facing American families for at least a generation. The basic choice is whether to retain the formula Ronald Reagan advocated and pursued in office—combining a broad-based, low-rate income tax with a pay-as-you-go Social Security system—or shift to taxing the narrower base of "consumption" at higher rates while replacing Social Security pensions with individual retirement accounts.

In a seminal February 1977 speech, Reagan cautioned against those "on the left or right . . . who worship the god of political, social, and economic abstractions, ignoring the realities of everyday life." He called for a "new Republican party," which, by applying traditional conservative principles to economic, social, and national security policy, would serve as the "political mechanism through which the goals of the majority of Americans can be achieved." The most striking political fact about Republican presidents and presidential candidates since Reagan's departure is that, while faring steadily better on social and national security issues by following the Reagan approach, they have fared steadily worse on economic policy by moving away from it. For example, President Bush's 2004 reelection resulted from a whopping 19-point advantage in social and national security issues, which outweighed an 18-point deficit on economic policy issues. Had Bush merely broken even on economic policy, he would have enjoyed a historic landslide. This gives a sense of the magnitude of the political upside if Republicans can recapture the success of the Reagan fiscal program.

Beneath the legal barnacles left by decades of hand-in-pocket relations between lawmakers and lobbyists, U.S. fiscal policy retains a discernible economic, moral, and political logic, which owes much to Abraham Lincoln (who introduced the first income tax in 1862), to the "maternalist" (Allan Carlson's apt term) group of women who designed the pay-as-you-go Social Security retirement system in the 1930s, and to Ronald Reagan, who led bipartisan efforts to balance Social Security taxes and benefits (in 1983) and to reform the income tax (in 1986). This logic can be stated simply: The most just, efficient, and popular way to pay for common goods like national defense and general government is an income tax with the broadest possible base, lowest possible tax rates, and most equal treatment of labor income (salaries, wages, fringe benefits) and property income (interest, capital gains, dividends, rent, royalties, etc.). This last point is the one that has bedeviled the post-Reagan Republican party, as it has repeatedly been tempted in the name of capital formation, investment, and growth (all good things!) to tax property income less heavily than labor income, rather than treating the two equally. This is why Republicans, for all their reputation as tax-cutters, have had almost nothing to say about the larger bite of payroll taxes over the last two decades.

The same logic dictates that narrower benefits require narrower funding. For example, transfer payments to persons or families (including Social Security and unemployment benefits) should be paid by taxes on labor income, and subsidies for property-owners by taxes on property (like gasoline taxes and vehicle tolls to fund roads and bridges). In my experience, these principles are the key to an economic policy that is legislatively successful and politically popular. Ignore them and plausible schemes startle their proponents by erupting in political flames—as has happened with all proposals

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so far for a flat tax or Social Security privatization (most recently in 1996 and 1999, respectively).

Two central economic realities of everyday life are as true in 21st-century America as when Aristotle first pointed them out in 4th-century B.C. Athens: Most wealth is owned by families living in households, not the government, and this wealth is of two kinds, people and property—or as University of Chicago economist (and later Nobel laureate) Theodore W. Schultz dubbed them in 1960, "human and nonhuman capital." But there's a key difference. Since the ownership of property can be subdivided almost indefinitely and transferred in competitive markets, everyone receives the same rate of return (other things, like risk, being equal). But human capital is embodied in people, for whom (since the abolition of slavery) there is fortunately no longer a market, and its rate of return varies with the age of the person in whom it is embodied. For example, in 1999-2000 the real rate of return on college tuition at age 20 was about 16 percent, compared with the stock market's long-term average return of 6 to 7 percent. But by age 40 your money would be better invested in property, and at about age 50 the return on tuition turns negative. (The main reason is that four years of college roughly double average annual earnings, but as we get older, those earnings can be realized for fewer years.)

Such differences between people and property have always existed, but two important changes have occurred mostly within the last century: the separation of the household and business firm, and the unprecedented increase in human lifespan. In December 1861, Abraham Lincoln could accurately report that, "In most of the southern States, a majority of the whole people of all colors are neither slaves nor masters; while in the northern a large majority are neither hirers nor hired. Men with their families—wives, sons, and daughters—work for themselves, on their farms, in their houses, and in their shops, taking the whole product to themselves, and asking no favors of capital on the one hand, nor of hired laborers or slaves on the other." In other words, human and nonhuman wealth were still mostly owned and produced by family households.

Since then, the two kinds of production have become specialized. The modern business firm, historically speaking, is a recent offshoot of the household and specializes in producing and maintaining productive property, while the modern household specializes in "producing" and "maintaining" human persons. One or both adults in every household (if not employed by a government or nonprofit organization) are typically employed by a business, which combines the services of workers and of productive property (buildings, land, raw materials, machines, patents) to produce new goods and services for sale in the market. Though most such property is directly owned by businesses, families still own it indirectly, by owning the shares and bonds issued by those companies. When the firm's product is sold—for example, when a family purchases a new car or computer—the money is paid out entirely as income to the producers: labor compensation (wages, salaries, and fringe benefits) to workers and property compensation (interest, dividends, and retained earnings or capital gains) to property-owners. In the final analysis, there is nothing else to tax.

The other key change is the unprecedented increase in the human lifespan. From ancient Rome to 15th-century Europe, human life appears to have averaged just 24 years. This meant that most people experienced only two phases of life, dependent childhood and active parenthood. As Angus Maddison has shown, it also meant there was no economic growth, because a high birth rate merely offset a high mortality rate, and most people didn't live long enough to accumulate more property than they used up. Steady advances in medicine and public hygiene increased life expectancy at birth to about 38 years in the United States in 1850 and 47 years in 1900. Since then, life expectancy at birth has risen by more years than in the previous five centuries combined—to about 80 for women and 75 for men. As a result, most people now experience four distinct phases of life: dependent childhood, active parenthood, the "empty nest," and retirement. Longer life has caused a sharp increase in investment in both people and property, and thus faster economic growth, because the returns can now be realized for many more years. These basic facts account for the pattern of lifetime earnings shown in the chart on the following page.

Early in life, income is mostly labor compensation, which starts at zero and increases as we acquire valuable skills; rises rapidly between childhood and the mid-30s as we enter and gain experience in the labor market; rises more slowly to peak at around age 50; then drops finally to zero in retirement. Property income starts close to zero early in life (for those with little or no inherited property), but becomes increasingly significant as the expected rate of return on investment in human capital falls below the rate on investment in property. And for those who acquire significant wealth from any source—whether inheritance, talent, luck, or hard work—the only practical way to save it is in the form of claims on property (stocks, bonds, etc.).

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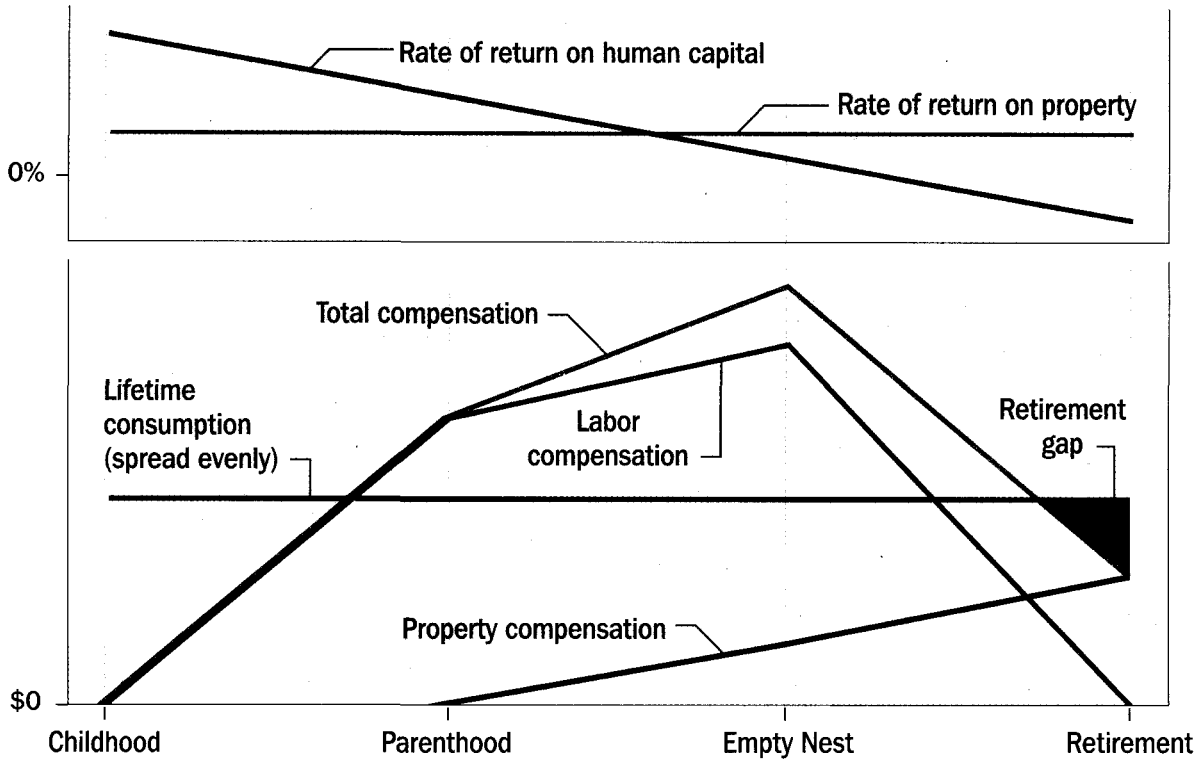
Lifetime Income and Consumption



These facts of everyday life account for the distribution of income among American families. But to interpret them, we must reconsider the meaning of *income*. In the same article in which Schultz coined the term "human capital," his first policy conclusion was this: "Our tax laws everywhere discriminate against human capital. Although the stock of such capital has become large and even though it is obvious that human capital, like other forms of reproducible capital, depreciates, becomes obsolete, and entails maintenance, our tax laws are all but blind on these matters." What he meant was that labor and property income—the returns on investment in human and nonhuman capital, respectively—are measured differently. Before property income is ever taxed, the costs of maintaining the property in working order are excluded and a further allowance for the property's depreciation in use is deducted. Only what's left over after these calculations is taxed. But labor compensation is taxed without regard to its maintenance costs or depreciation. A farmer who buys a $50,000 tractor to increase the productivity of his operations will eventually deduct that full cost as well as maintenance and repairs from his income. Should he spend the same amount sending his daughter to ag school to become an expert manager of the family's property, he will enjoy no similar deductions.

It might be argued that the combination of standard tax deductions, personal exemptions, earned income and child tax credits, etc., which aim to exempt a poverty-level income from taxation, amount to a rough equivalent of minimal "human maintenance" costs. But there is no allowance for the depreciation of human capital, which, since we all die, is always 100 percent. Therefore a much larger share of labor than property compensation is subject to tax. The political process has clumsily and inefficiently responded by imposing progressive tax rates and multiple layers of taxation on property income.

The simplest way to treat all income equally is to add back the allowance for property depreciation to property income and to tax this larger amount, while subtracting a poverty-level income ("human maintenance") from labor compensation before taxing this smaller total. We can call the resulting measure "broad family income." About 75 percent of gross income for the lowest four-fifths of families is labor income, but the share falls to about 40 percent for the top 1 percent of families.

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This is the crux of the tax-reform debate. Because "consumption"-tax advocates inconsistently define *investment* to mean investment in property but not in people, taxing "consumption" essentially means taxing labor compensation. For instance, in the example above, the tractor expenses would be treated as investment, the ag school expenses as "consumption" (which is why throughout this article I put the word "consumption" in quotation marks). I sometimes call this worldview the economic Stork Theory, because it begins with the assumption that people and their skills arrive from out of the blue, as if delivered by a large stork. Dick Armey's and Steve Forbes's flat-tax plan of the 1990s would have achieved this result by exempting from taxation both investment in productive property (through "expensing" of plant and equipment) and the personal income that is the return on that property (interest, dividends, rents, and capital gains). After a transition period, the result would have been to exclude all property income from the tax base—leaving, in effect, a glorified payroll tax. (A national sales tax gets the same result immediately.) Since property income is about one-third and labor income two-thirds of total national income, such a tax reform would require a new tax rate at least 50 percent higher than the old income tax to raise the same revenue (or a much larger deficit, if you wanted to avoid imposing a tax increase on most workers). Exempting a poverty-level income from taxation through increased standard deductions, personal exemptions, or tax credits can prevent a tax increase on lowest-income taxpayers, but about twice as many middle- and upper-income taxpayers would get a tax hike as a tax cut.

The economic Stork Theory begins with the assumption that people and their skills arrive from out of the blue, as if delivered by a large stork.

It thus didn't take a crystal ball when I warned my former boss Jack Kemp on the first day of hearings by the 1995 GOP National Commission on Economic Growth and Tax Reform, which he chaired, that "all the 'consumption' taxes are going to self-destruct politically, when it becomes apparent that any revenue-neutral version will represent a tax increase for working families." And that's exactly what happened to the Armey-Forbes plan in the 1996 Republican presidential primaries—unfortunately, not before the party commission had endorsed the politically suicidal approach.

The fairest, simplest, and most efficient way to reform the tax code would involve not just treating labor and property income alike, but also simplifying the means of collection, so that taxes are filed mostly by employers (business, government, nonprofit, or the self-employed) rather than by individuals. This would be a radical simplification for the tens of millions of people who would no longer have a personal relationship with the IRS every April, but it is a less radical proposal than it may at first sound. It would simply treat all income in the same way that President Bush proposed last year for dividends: non-deductible when paid by businesses, but non-taxable when received by individuals.

Recall the example of the family purchasing a new car or computer. The business pays out the money entirely as income to its employees, investors, and creditors. Under our current system, the business deducts all that compensation (except some dividends) from its taxable income, and the government taxes the recipients' income. If instead the compensation paid by the business (or other employer) were non-deductible, the existing corporate and personal income taxes would be superfluous, because the tax on all that labor and property income would already have been "prepaid." There would, however, be a per-person rebate for the income and payroll taxes paid by the employer on income below the poverty line ("human maintenance").

If a flat tax rate were applied to such a broadened tax base, there would be three interesting results. First, the tax code's complexity would disappear. Most families would have no contact with the IRS except to receive their rebate. Instead of the IRS having to collect tax from more than 100 million taxpaying entities, it would have to track only a few million businesses. Second, both the tax code and the economy would be vastly more efficient. The same amount of total revenue as now raised by both the current corporate and personal income tax codes could be raised with a flat rate of about 16 percent, less than half the current code's top rate. To balance non-Social Security federal spending and eliminate the current deficit, a rate of 18 percent would be required. There would be no double taxation of any income, or any incentive to make decisions for tax reasons other than economic efficiency. Third, the tax burden under such a system would be about as "progressive" as the current tax code. This is because even though both corporate and personal income taxes with their progressive tax rates would be replaced, all property income now excluded from the tax base would be taxed, while the sub-poverty line "human maintenance" costs contained in labor compensation would not be taxed.

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The same economic facts of life also explain the economic and political logic of Social Security reform. While income varies according to the lifetime pattern described above, we all need to be fed, clothed, sheltered, and transported, whether or not we earn income. Our income typically exceeds consumption during parenthood and the "empty nest," while consumption exceeds income during childhood and retirement. This last fact creates what might be called the "retirement gap." When people retire, labor compensation falls to zero, yet consumption is usually much higher than the property income from earlier saving. The basic problem is how to fill this gap without forgoing retirement, suffering a sharp fall in consumption during retirement, or lowering total lifetime earnings and consumption (which is what happens if early in life one invests more in lower-yielding property and less in higher-yielding human capital).

Without government, the retirement gap can be bridged only by love—a gift from someone (most often one's adult children) whose own consumption is thereby reduced. Pay-as-you-go Social Security solved the retirement problem by providing an asset that the private financial markets cannot. While a financial account is essentially a claim on property, a pay-as-you-go Social Security retirement pension amounts to a share in a diversified human capital mutual fund. Social Security makes it possible, in effect, for workers, by pooling a fraction of their income, to transfer labor compensation from their working years to retirement, and to surviving dependents after their deaths. However, once pay-as-you-go benefits have closed the retirement gap, any further expansion of benefits necessarily comes at the expense of smaller investment in either children or productive property. The pay-as-you-go system therefore requires periodic readjustment to maintain proper balance among these three competing imperatives. Reagan and Congress undertook such an adjustment in 1983. "The press is trying to paint me as now trying to undo the New Deal," Reagan complained in his diary in January 1982. "I remind them I voted for FDR four times. I'm trying to undo the 'Great Society.' It was LBJ's war on poverty that led us to our present mess."

Without government, the retirement gap can be bridged only by love—a gift from someone (most often one's adult children) whose own consumption is thereby reduced.

Today, any Social Security reform plan must start with a simple fact: Social Security's expected future deficits are entirely the result of lower birthrates (owing in part to three decades and counting of legal abortion). If that trend were reversed, the deficits would be easily surmounted. But let's assume it won't be. Options for filling the retirement gap are still much broader than Republicans have so far considered. What's clear is that plans to replace pay-as-you-go Social Security with compulsory individual financial accounts are based on the same Stork Theory as the consumption tax, and would worsen the demographic problem. As the redoubtable Martin Feldstein, the GOP's preeminent "stork theorist," has explained, "The essential feature of the transition to a funded program of retirement benefits is a period of reduced consumption by employees during the early years of the transition so that a dedicated capital stock can be accumulated. This dedicated capital is then used to finance retirement benefits, thereby permitting lower taxes and more consumption by employees in later years."

Note that in Feldstein's view, "capital" means "non-human capital": education, training, and child-rearing are classed as "consumption," not investment in human capital. The analysis takes the population and its skills as given, and only by virtue of this false assumption comes to the equally false conclusion that taxes on property income not only should but inevitably must be shifted to workers. As the demographic implosions in Europe and Japan suggest, heavily shifting to "consumption" taxes causes a sharp decline in investment in human capital.

When the pay-as-you-go system started, its rate of benefit return on payroll tax contributions was much higher than the stock market, because there were many workers supporting few retirees; but in the long run the average rate of return on pay-as-you-go Social Security is equal to the rate of economic growth (which over the past 75 years has been higher than the average yield on government bonds). Replacing pay-as-you-go pensions with individual financial accounts, as Feldstein forthrightly acknowledges, requires the startup process to go into reverse: The first generation to work under the new regime must continue paying the benefits for their parents' generation while saving for their own retirement.

The size of this transition tax was strikingly illustrated when the author of the leading plan to divert Social Security taxes into private accounts recently had the plan costed out by Steve Goss, Social Security's chief actuary. Until then, its proponents had argued, with

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apparent plausibility, that the transition cost might be financed by borrowing several trillion dollars, halving discretionary spending, and reaping increased tax revenues from increased investment in plant and equipment. But Goss's estimates made three unpleasant features of the plan explicit: First, general-revenue "transfers to the Trust Fund would, however, not be contingent on achieving these [cuts] in actual federal spending"; second, there would be no net increase in plant and equipment, economic growth, or revenue "feedback" if the cost were financed by federal borrowing; and third, replacing the payroll taxes diverted from the Trust Fund without additional borrowing would require tax increases, mostly on individual and corporate income, lasting several decades and ranging up to more than 7 percent of taxable payroll.

Proponents, armed with millions in lobbying dollars but few popular votes, are assuming that this plan will be endorsed by President Bush, brought by Republicans to the House and Senate floors, and adopted by majorities in both chambers. I think it highly unlikely that any one of these will happen, let alone all three. I don't see how President Bush could possibly endorse such a plan, because it violates his two basic principles for Social Security reform: that any accounts must be voluntary, and that they must involve no tax increase. The private accounts aren't voluntary, because if you forgo the private account option, you must still pay the government's cost of funding everyone else's account. And the plan would mean a much larger and earlier tax increase than even John Kerry proposed.

I don't think it will happen, further, because White House strategist Karl Rove wants to replay the successes, not the mistakes, that followed William McKinley's 1896 and 1900 campaigns on the Lincolnian slogans "Honest Money" and "A Full Dinner-Pail." Upon reelection in 1900, McKinley announced that he was reversing his support for a high tariff—the consumption tax of its day—and would aggressively apply antitrust law. Theodore Roosevelt, who succeeded McKinley upon the latter's assassination, followed this strategy, and ultimately endorsed an income tax to replace the tariff. Roosevelt's differences with his anointed successor, William Howard Taft, precisely over the tariff-versus-income-tax issue split the Republican party in 1912, handing the presidency to Woodrow Wilson with only 43 percent of the vote, and giving control of Congress to the Democrats.

As for the Republican Congress, I don't believe it will like the plan any better than it did the Feldstein plan of 1999, which died in *Republican*-controlled committees, when dismayed GOP lawmakers discovered the "essential feature": a 75 percent "clawback" tax on all money withdrawn from personal retirement accounts, after which the plan still wasn't fiscally balanced. They'll have a similar shock when they discover the huge income-tax "clawback" in the new Ferrara-Ryan-Sununu version. The Goss memo amounts to opposition research for all 2006 challengers to any Republicans who cosponsor or vote for the plan.

The Social Security reform that makes most sense to me is a variation of a plan long advocated by former Republican Social Security chief actuary Robert Myers. It would cut payroll taxes immediately, thus getting rid of the Social Security "surplus," which Congress has simply been using to fund deficits in the rest of the federal budget. In exchange, there would be a matching reduction in the level of future retirement benefits (prorated for the share of working years that each worker received the tax cut), eliminating expected future deficits. I proposed an "80 percent" solution for current payroll tax rates and future benefits to the Kemp commission, but after nine more years of wasted excess payroll taxes, I would now recommend a "75 percent solution." This plan is truly voluntary, because families would be free but not required to put the payroll tax-cut money into financial retirement accounts; for most families with children, education would be a more pressing (and higher-yielding) investment.

Since the plan reduces current payroll taxes and future benefits in the same proportion, the rate of return per dollar of payroll contribution would be higher than under any of the other alternatives, which involve tax increases *and* benefit cuts. The plan also depends far less than the other plans on the accuracy of forecasts for economic growth and financial asset returns. If economic growth is as slow in the future as the actuaries have been projecting, then families will be prepared and the system will be kept in balance with relatively small adjustments. But if economic growth continues to outperform the actuaries' projections, as it has in recent years, the system will be in surplus and payroll taxes can be cut again, the benefit reductions halted, or both.

In short, a simple, low, flat-rate income tax modeled on President Bush's dividend proposal, combined with a truly voluntary plan to balance the pay-as-you-go Social Security pension system without income-tax funding, remains eminently doable. And it is the way to continue the just, efficient, and popular fiscal legacy linking Abraham Lincoln and Ronald Reagan, and finally realize Reagan's vision of not "a temporary uneasy alliance, but the creation of a new, lasting majority." ♦

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What Is Enlightenment?

Gertrude Himmelfarb explores three paths to modern times By Diana Schaub

We must still not be enlightened—given how little we agree about the answer to the question, "What is Enlightenment?" We seem not to agree even when the question is purely historical: The phenomenon that used to be called "the Age of Enlightenment" has become contested terrain, and the dissenters from the Enlightenment project have grown in number. No one, apparently, wants to be thoroughly modern anymore.

No one, that is, except Gertrude Himmelfarb. While most of the critics of modernity take their bearings from either the postmodern or the premodern, the eminent intellectual historian sets out in the latest of her many elegant and masterly books to reclaim the Enlightenment.

Diana Schaub teaches political science at Loyola College in Maryland.

Her avowedly "ambitious attempt"—*The Roads to Modernity: The British, French, and American Enlightenments*—receives an assist from recent scholarship on the multiplicity of the Enlightenment. By taking seriously the insight that the Enlightenment was incarnated in different ways among and within different nations, Himmelfarb is able to shift the spotlight from the French (who have traditionally monopolized it) to the British and, to a lesser extent, the Americans. Himmelfarb is forthright about her aims: "I am engaged in a doubly revisionist exercise," she writes, "making the Enlightenment more British and making the British Enlightenment more inclusive."

The Roads to Modernity
The British, French, and American Enlightenments
by Gertrude Himmelfarb
Knopf, 284 pp., $25

To reach this goal, she subsumes the Scottish Enlightenment within the British—and grants enlightened credentials to some unlikely candidates, among them Edmund Burke and John Wesley. The end result is a remapping of the Enlightenment that scales back some of the traditional peaks (Voltaire, Diderot, and the *philosophes*) while raising new ones (Shaftesbury, Hutcheson, Smith, and Hume). Himmelfarb discovers overlooked tributaries (Burke and Wesley) and a land bridge between the continents (Montesquieu). The territory remains recognizable as the Enlightenment, but it's like the difference between a map based on the self-aggrandizing tales of explorers and a map based on aerial reconnaissance and ground surveys.

Perhaps that metaphor suggests too much impartiality on the part of the author. Himmelfarb admits to being a partisan of the British as against the French, but, in the current state of his-

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Voltaire

toriography and public opinion, hers is a partisanship that brings some balance and so furthers the cause of a fair accounting. Not that *The Roads to Modernity* will settle the question of disputed borders. In fact it will fuel the debates, since Himmelfarb argues that some roads to modernity are better than others. Moreover, despite the implication of her title, she seems to argue that the roads end up at different destinations. If there are plural "Enlightenments," then aren't there plural "modernities" as well?

Interested in the general spirit of each nation's Enlightenment, Himmelfarb is engaged in what might be called a Montesquieuan enterprise. She would not take offense at the comparison. Indeed, because of Montesquieu's prudence and Anglophilia, Himmelfarb pretty much excises the philosopher from the French Enlightenment. (While I don't at all quarrel with her presentation of the differences between Montesquieu and the *Encyclopédistes*, I must say that it makes it easier to criticize the French when you strip them of their philosophers, Montesquieu and Rousseau, and leave them only with the *philosophes* and *poseurs*.)

Himmelfarb's shorthand designations for the general spirits of the three national Enlightenments are: the sociology of virtue (England), the ideology of reason (France), and the politics of liberty (America). It is a mark of the basic rightness of these designations that readers can probably, without any help, match each general spirit with the appropriate nation.

Equally revealing as the substantive terms are the disciplinary qualifiers Himmelfarb chooses: sociology, ideology, and politics. Although her focus is on the ideas, she acknowledges that the national differences are in part a function of differing conditions. In Britain, where both a religious reformation and a political revolution preceded the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, the focus of the moral philosophers was on the social virtues of sympathy and benevolence that would underwrite gradual social reform. In revolutionary America, politics was primary, in both thought and deed: The formulators of the new science of politics were also its implementers. In *ancien régime* France, by contrast, all that was available was armchair theorizing, which contributed to the ideology of reason that had disastrous effects when action—the French Revolution—finally occurred.

Montesquieu said of the English that they were "the people in the world who have best known how to take advantage of each of these three great things at the same time: religion, commerce, and liberty." Himmelfarb quotes this passage, and, like Montesquieu, she seeks to understand how they did it—and particularly how religion fit into the combination. Where the French attitude toward religion can be summed up in a sentence (Voltaire's "*Ecrasez l'infâme*"), it requires a number of chapters to sketch the contours of the British Enlightenment's more welcoming stance. Himmelfarb offers a fascinating tour of the moral philosophers' views on the utility of religious belief and the compatibility of "social affections and religious dispositions."

Complementing that presentation is an equally fascinating examination of Methodism, especially the social effects of its "gospel of charity and good works." The range of Methodism's benevolent activities (hospitals, schools, libraries, mutual aid societies, poor relief, antislavery work) constituted "an Enlightenment for the common man." Together, "secular philosophers and religious enthusiasts" articulated a social ethos "that found practical expression in the reform movements and philanthropic enterprises that flourished during the century, culminating in what the Evangelical writer Hannah More described . . . as 'the Age of Benevolence,' and what a later historian called 'the new humanitarianism.'" There were, of course, some outliers. Himmelfarb devotes a chapter to the radical dissenters: Paine, Price, Priestley, and Godwin; but just as the moderate Montesquieu gets to swim the Channel to England, the English radicals are, in effect, ostracized: "It might even be said that these radicals belong more to the history of the French and American Enlightenments than to the British."

In the book's epilogue, Himmelfarb briefly traces the subsequent fate of the three Enlightenments. While scholarly interest in the French Enlightenment remains high, Himmelfarb finds that it has no popular resonance except as a "cautionary tale." The British Enlightenment, too, has suffered a slide into public irrelevance: Adam Smith, the central figure in that Enlightenment, is not a folk hero or a reference point in many political debates.

America's Enlightenment tradition, however, is flourishing. The institutions established by the Founding Fathers still shape the American character; the documents they penned are the objects of our political reasoning and our partisan debates; and their personal example is still found worthy of study and often of emulation (as attested to by the spate of best-selling biographies read by ordi-

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nary citizens). According to Himmelfarb, not only has America kept alive its own politics of liberty, but it has imported the sociology of virtue as well. She says that America, with its combination of religious faith, capitalism, and morality, "has inherited and preserved aspects of the British Enlightenment that the British themselves have discarded and that other countries (France, most notably) have never adopted."

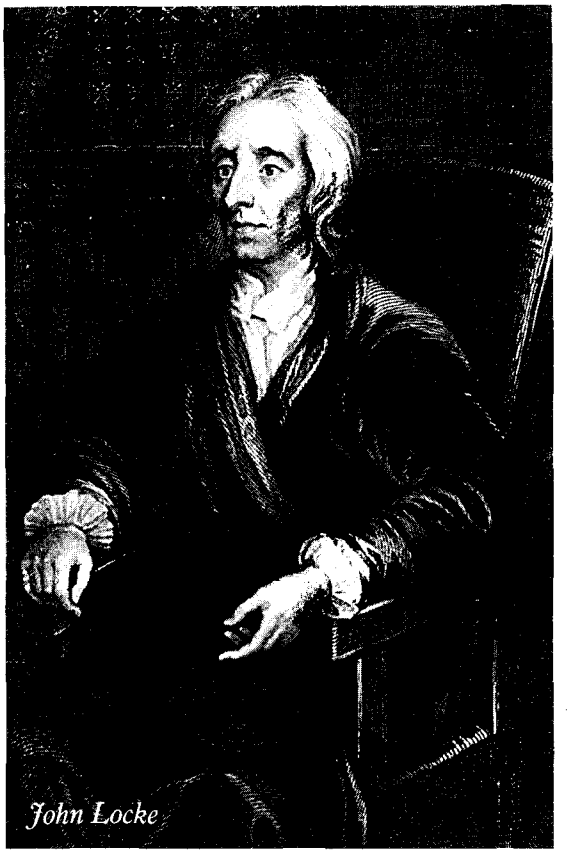
I find this an intriguing but not altogether persuasive claim. I wish she had said more both about the British renunciation of the sociology of virtue and about the American embrace of it. According to Shaftesbury and his followers, man has an inborn moral sense and natural compassion. This teaching about the moral sense is compatible with religious belief but not dependent on it. The foundation of virtue is not love of God. Neither is it reason or self-interest.

But, if the British moral philosophers were right about human nature, how are we to understand Britain's "demoralization"? It appears that even if the moral sense is innate, it requires rigorous cultivation to actualize it. How do you get from sympathy (which is merely passive) to charity? How do you get from benevolence to beneficence, from good will to good works?

Rousseau, who also recognized the existence of natural compassion, was very aware of the problem. He tells of the tyrant who sheds ready tears at the sight of suffering (when uncaused by himself). Perhaps the social success that seemed to attend the British Enlightenment was more dependent on religion (and other forms of inherited moral capital) than it thought itself to be.

In speaking of the fate of religion in liberty-loving England, Montesquieu predicts that "what would happen is either that everyone would be very indifferent to all sorts of religion of whatever kind, in which case everyone would tend to embrace the dominant religion, or that one would be zealous for religion in general, in which case sects would multiply." British liberty followed the former course, with indifference eventually triumphing over zeal, followed by a drying-up of the wellsprings of benevolence. By contrast, religious liberty in America resulted in an enthusiastic multiplicity of sects.

There is another possible explanation for America's healthier civil society that Himmelfarb alludes to but does not pursue. In her final paragraphs, she mentions what Alexis de Tocqueville said about "self-interest properly understood"—that it was "of all philosophic theories the most appropriate to the needs of men in our time." She suggests, however, that we substitute "the moral sense" of the British Enlightenment for "self-interest properly understood." A social ethic grounded in compassion was, she writes, "most appropriate to the needs of men" in eighteenth-century Britain and twenty-first-century America.


John Locke

And yet, by reminding us of Tocqueville's analysis of self-interest rightly understood, Himmelfarb perhaps undercuts her own argument. Tocqueville shows that you don't need Shaftesbury and company to understand or foster virtue in America. The American approach to civic virtue is traceable to Locke, not Shaftesbury. According to the doctrine of self-interest properly understood, it is in one's self-interest both to do the right thing (like tell the truth) and to do good things for others (like be kind and helpful).

This enlightened selfishness does not require altruism or compassion or humanitarian zeal to produce neighborly behavior and public-spirited action. What it requires is instruction in the coincidence of public and private good. Citizens must be taught the *utility* of virtue: "Honesty is the best *policy*," as James Madison liked to say.

In fact, America seems a compound of Locke and Christianity. Despite the presence of other streams of thought, these remain the dominant ones. Our virtue is usually grounded either in the calculations of self-interest or the love of God. (These can even be conflated, as Tocqueville shows, in a chapter revealingly entitled "How the Americans Apply the Doctrine of Self-Interest Well Understood in the Matter of Religion.")

Both of these foundations of morality seem to me more efficacious than the sentiment of compassion, but then I may just be particularly unsentimental. Gertrude Himmelfarb is certainly right in *The Roads to Modernity* that the "politics of compassion," which used to be a left-wing specialty, is now (with the advent of "compassionate conservatism") bipartisan. A variety of public policy choices can bear the imprimatur of compassion. And if the rhetoric of compassion is now mandatory, it is incumbent on us to understand its intellectual genealogy.

But the hard work of instilling virtue doesn't take place on the political hustings; it takes place in families and churches and schools. And I suspect that the folks on the front lines will continue to rely on appeals to self-interest and salvation. ♦

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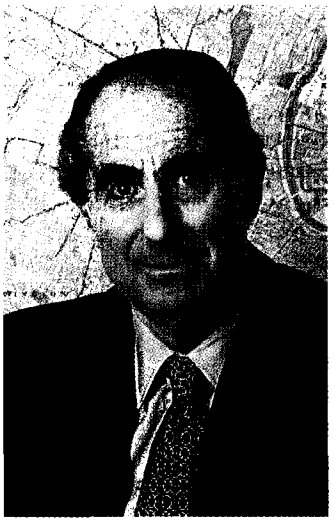
American Gothic

Philip Roth pens a what-if novel: What if America had turned against the Jews? BY STEPHEN SCHWARTZ

With *The Plot Against America*, Philip Roth has become the first—well, the first what? If not the first serious writer of fiction, or the first highbrow author, then at least the first of those regarded as America's magisterial novelists to write a deliberately "counterfactual" story.

Also known as "alternate histories" or "what-if tales," counterfactual fiction builds on the reader's knowledge of what actually did happen in history—the South lost the Civil War, Hitler was defeated—to suppose what *didn't* happen: What if the South had won? What if Hitler had triumphed? Often relying on explanatory devices involving "parallel universes," alternate history exists mostly as one of the more pulpy genres of science fiction.



The Plot Against America
by Philip Roth
Houghton Mifflin, 400 pp., $26

It can be pleasurable and clever, as its writers compete to see how small a change they can make in the actual facts to produce a massive change in the flow of history. And with Philip K. Dick's 1962 *The Man in the High Castle*, a story of America conquered by the Nazis and Japanese, the genre produced its one genuine classic. But alternate history has nonetheless remained a fairly low-rent kind of fiction, the kind that sells best at airport bookstores and science-fiction conventions.

So will Philip Roth elevate the genre to a higher status? Something similar to Philip K. Dick's conceit moves *The Plot Against America*. Roth offers a dark picture of the United States after 1940, with the interventionist and globalist democratizer Franklin D. Roosevelt defeated for a third presidential term by the Jew-baiting Hitler sympathizer, Charles A. Lindbergh.

Roth's story is fast-paced and mordant, alternate history as seen through the eyes of Philip Roth himself, remembering his boyhood in the 1940s and imagining how it could have been different. "Lucky Lindy" was known worldwide as the first man to fly a plane alone across the Atlantic in 1927, then as the tragic hero whose infant son was kidnapped and murdered in 1932, and after that as the leader of the isolationist "America First" movement. So what if Lindbergh had broken through politically? What if he had become president?

The Plot Against America includes Roth's father Herman and his brother Sandy as major protagonists. The Roths are middle-class Jewish residents of the Weequahic neighborhood in Newark, New Jersey. The parents are in their thirties; Philip, born in 1933, is seven at the outset of the tale, interested in stamp-collecting. Sandy is twelve and interested in art. But in the world as it wasn't, Roth inverts his memories to have it all turn frightening. Lindbergh becomes the Republican candidate for the presidency on a platform branding the Jews as warmongering aliens disconnected from the American majority. In the pilot's infamous Des Moines speech (really delivered on September 11, 1941, but set back a year by Roth for fictional purposes), Lindbergh labeled "the British, the Jewish, and the Roosevelt administration" as the "most important groups that have been pressing this country toward war." The Jews, Lindbergh charged, presented their "greatest danger to this country in their large ownership and influence in our motion pictures, our press, our radio, and our government."

Roth's Lindbergh takes as his running mate Democratic senator Burton K. Wheeler of Montana, another strident isolationist and Jew-baiter, once famous as a corporation-bashing progressive but increasingly hypnotized, as the 1930s wore on, by a belief that he could resuscitate the widespread leftist opposition to American involvement in the World War of 1914-18.

Of course, Wheeler and other liberal and pacifist isolationists in the late 1930s did not understand that the nature of German ambitions had changed with the rise of Hitler. But in Roth's version, Lindbergh and Wheeler win election, while Hitler consolidates his triumphant march across Western Europe. Lindy meets Adolf in Iceland, and the two agree on peace with Germany. The aviator then travels to Honolulu to sign a "Hawaii Understanding," which recognizes the Japanese conquest of French Indochina and the Dutch East Indies. By that treaty, America gains what it already had: control of Hawaii and the other Pacific possessions, and continuing sovereignty over the Philippines.

Meanwhile, Philip's cousin Alvin has left for Canada, to enlist in the British-commanded forces fighting fascism. Back home, bad news comes incrementally, as it did for many people under the real Nazi occupation of

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Europe. In Roth's account, something called the "Office of American Absorption" is established, with a scheme called "Just Folks," that sends Jewish youth from urban environments to live in rural communities, and Philip's brother Sandy joins up, going to Kentucky to work on a tobacco farm. Sandy comes back a thorough enthusiast of the program and the president, and possessing a newfound contempt for "ghetto Jews" like his parents.

All pictures: CORBIS.

Charles Lindbergh (left) waves with Senator Burton K. Wheeler at a 1941 "America First" rally.

In this context, Lindbergh's appointment of Henry Ford, an even more extreme Judeophobe, as secretary of the interior comes to appear anything but innocuous. Cousin Alvin returns from the war missing his left leg below the knee and nursing bitterness along with a suppurating wound. Except for Philip's father Herman, many of the Jews make opportunistic choices. Sandy remains obdurately loyal to the new regime, and Alvin turns to crime. After he is offered resettlement of his whole family in Kentucky under a new "absorption" plan, Herman leaves his job selling insurance and goes to work as a night-shift produce market laborer for another Jewish collaborationist.

Times are bleak, and with Lindbergh in the White House, it seems they can only worsen. And yet, in Roth's fictional fascist-ruled America, the majority of Gentile Americans aren't buying it. An invented relative of Philip, Aunt Evelyn, is the paramour of a thoroughly repellent collaborationist rabbi, Lionel Bengelsdorf. The couple provides a cover of Jewish support for the Lindbergh administration, to the excruciating point of appearing at a White House dinner with the president and Nazi foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop.

There begins to appear a wave of revulsion as Lindbergh, "accustomed to nearly universal deification," is suddenly "stymied by the strong disapproval that the opposition [is] so rapidly able to muster against him." Franklin Roosevelt has seemingly withdrawn from politics, but he appears at a protest rally to denounce Lindbergh and Hitler, while others come forward to lead the antifascist resistance. Chief among them are the unsavory, extremely urban, offensively loud, egregiously irreverent, and above all very Jewish Walter Winchell, gossip columnist extraordinaire, and the popular Italian-American mayor of New York, Fiorello LaGuardia. After he is dropped from his radio program and fired from his newspaper column by William Randolph Hearst, Winchell announces that he will run for president against "Adolf Lindbergh."

In one of the book's many sharp notes, the *New York Times*, although Jewish-owned, sides with Lindbergh against Winchell, who retorts that "the snooty Park Avenue proprietors of the gutless *New York Times* aren't the first ultracivilized Jewish Quislings to grovel before an anti-Semitic master because they're just too, too refined to fight." Roth's ear is impeccable, and his Winchell, as well as his LaGuardia and other historical personages, are thoroughly believable as they are thrust into roles they were never called upon to fill.

And yet, in the alternate history of *The Plot Against America*, the nation has been frightened by war into electing a Jew-baiter as president, but no Holocaust arrives on our soil. A pogrom briefly breaks out in Detroit, home to Ford, as well as to the Jew-baiting radio priest Charles Coughlin and the demented agitator Gerald L.K. Smith, and thousands of Jews flee across the nearby Canadian border. (It should be noted that Detroit really was struck by vicious anti-black riots during World War II.) More violence follows Winchell's campaign, culminating in his assassination, but the great mass of Gentiles as presented in this book remain calm and decent. They end up disillusioned with Lindbergh, Roosevelt returns to the White House, and "ordinary history" resumes following a Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor, a year after the real one.

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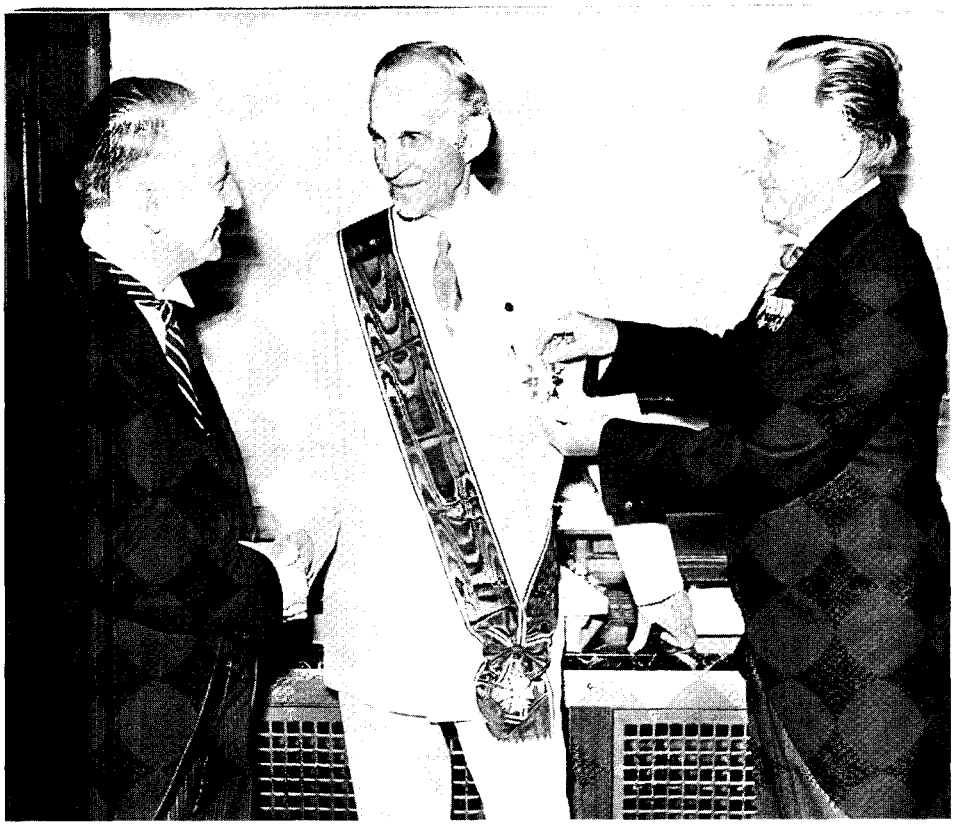

Henry Ford receives a medal from the German government in 1938.

However, there is a Gentile figure, and a critical gesture, that stands out in this narrative, which I believe to be the first novel to transfer convincingly the atmosphere of fascist Europe to these United States. After the Detroit outbreak, the Jews begin to plan for their defense. The first in arms are men who already have weapons—gangsters such as the Newark mobster Longy Zwillman, of whom Roth has previously written in the novel *Patrimony*. The more respectable Jewish community leaders cooperate with civil authorities in developing emergency measures to keep their families safe by urging urban Jews to accept Henry Ford's plan to disperse them into the hinterland.

Into the empty flat below the Roths move a family of Italian Americans named Cucuzza. The head of the household is a night watchman with a son named Joey and an American-born wife, as well as a crazed mother. When they move in, Mr. Cucuzza comes to the Roths with Joey, bearing gifts; a cake and, for Herman Roth, a pistol. Philip's father is baffled. What will he do with a gun? He believes in voting, not shooting, to defend his rights. Yet Mr. Cucuzza comprehends the dangers facing the Jewish family with much greater clarity: "Ifuh they come roun'," he says, "how you gonna protect?" Herman Roth steadfastly refuses the offered item, until the night when gunfire is heard in Newark—not a pogrom, it turns out—and Philip's father takes the gun from the Italian-American night watchman, who herds the Jews into an apartment formerly inhabited by a Jew who has committed suicide. There Mr. Cucuzza is transformed from a simple night watchman into the authentic "watchman of the night." Roth writes: "the biggest man I had ever seen moved with a pistol through the darkened flat, stealthily advancing from window to window to ascertain with the eagle-eyed thoroughness of the veteran night watchman whether anyone lurked nearby with an ax, a gun, a rope, or a can of kerosene." An inarticulate Catholic workman shelters the Jews, protects them, places his body between them and any threat, and offers no explanation for his action, except that he is disgusted by Mussolini and Hitler. Mr. Cucuzza is the epitome of the Righteous Gentile, and the personification of the authentic America.

Philip Roth seems to have a fascination with armed resistance to totalitarianism: In *I Married a Communist*, a man in suburban New Jersey rids himself of the presence of a corrupt, loudmouthed Stalinist at gunpoint. Roth's ability to reproduce the challenge of fascism in an American setting must in some part be owed to his long-cultivated interest in Eastern Europe and his reading of the literature of the Holocaust. He was the first to introduce to American audiences the Yugoslav author Danilo Kis, the Polish writers Bruno Schulz (murdered by a Nazi) and Tadeusz Borowski (who survived Auschwitz but then committed suicide), and the Czech novelist Milan Kundera.

Yet it was doubtless foreordained that certain reviewers would try to read into Roth's latest novel something completely absent from its pages. Jonathan Yardley, for example, wrote in the *Washington Post* that "the novel's subtext . . . gives every appearance of being an attack on George W. Bush and his administration." One can no more link Roth's new book with the politics of the reelected president than with the corruption of President Harding, or, for that matter, the mystery of the Easter Island statues.

The *New York Times*'s Judith Shulevitz unintentionally hit on the truth about Roth's subject matter—Lindberghite isolationism—in an exchange with her husband Nicholas Lemann published in the online journal *Slate*. Shulevitz suggested an "alternate" allegory for the book as an "indictment of antiwar isolationism, with its faint odor of anti-Semitism." But then she lapsed back into absurd comparisons—between Lindbergh in his pilot suit and George W. Bush on the deck of an aircraft carrier, between the imaginary Jewish resettlement operations in Roth's book and the Patriot Act, etc.

The most shrilly insistent such argument came from James Wolcott, who proclaimed in the *Nation* that the sold-out rabbi Bengelsdorf is "Roth's deadeye portrait of a proto-neoconser-

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vative." Indeed, "Roth doesn't make overexplicit the parallels between America's fall to fascism under Lindbergh and Bush's fear-based presidency. He doesn't need to. The parallels are so richly implicit, they vibrate like harp strings, dissolving the distance between then and now, fact and fiction."

Roth is no admirer of the president, but in a recent essay he disclaimed any similarity between past history and present. He also cites a curious example of how readers use literature politically. Czech writers, he noted, tried to appropriate the works of Franz Kafka as metaphors for their oppression under communism. But he left unstated an obvious fact: Kafka's *Trial* and *Castle* may very well have been satires of the impregnable and arbitrary Hapsburg bureaucracy under which Kafka had lived, but neither book ends in a fate comparable to those encountered in Auschwitz or the Gulag. And neither can the Patriot Act be compared with Auschwitz or the Gulag, except by those who seek to defile the memory of the victims of totalitarianism. The isolationists of 1941, Lindbergh on the right and Wheeler on the left, were enablers of Hitler and Stalin. The contrasts with verifiable historical facts make it absurd to annex Roth's new book to the corpus of Bushophobic tracts. One could draw much more apt comparisons between the stagey heroics of Lindbergh and John F. Kerry's ludicrous posturing at the Democratic convention, or between the corporation-bashing legal careers of Burton K. Wheeler and John Edwards.

Perhaps Roth intended—though probably he didn't, for books *do* have a life of their own—that his book should shame all those who in the past two years have referred to "the neoconservative cabal in the Pentagon" as a respectable euphemism for Jews allegedly dedicated to warmongering. With the country again saved from isolationism by the president's reelection, Roth, whatever his own views of the second administration of George W. Bush, deserves thanks for reminding us, through "alternate history," of our real history. Someone had to do it. ♦

Cheating History

Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin—the historians who let us down. **BY DAVID SKINNER**

Peter Charles Hoffer begins his book about the crisis in the history profession with the four most famous words in all of fiction: "Once upon a time." But instead of princes and witches, the reader gets an ironic story about the magical time when "history meant everything to Americans, and historians were revered and trusted. For everyone knew that history's lessons were immutable and inescapable."

Past Imperfect
Facts, Fictions, Fraud—American History from Bancroft and Parkman to Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin
by Peter Charles Hoffer
PublicAffairs, 287 pp., $26

Hoffer's point is this: Even before the postmodernists came along and cast all of history into the darkness of relativism, the facts still weren't all they were cracked up to be. The old historians, back in the nineteenth century and even in the early twentieth century, Hoffer shows, didn't treat primary sources with great care. Better raconteurs than curators, such major American scholars of the nineteenth century as Francis Parkman and George Bancroft made big, satisfying stories from history's incomplete and not-always-ennobling record.

They made America look good, Hoffer argues in *Past Imperfect: Facts, Fictions, Fraud—American History from Bancroft and Parkman to Ambrose, Bellesiles, Ellis, and Goodwin*, but at the expense of (you guessed it) women and minorities. These poor folks were excluded from the heroic story of our country. Up until the 1950s, historians emphasized progress and national unity, while bypassing events and institutions that would, if looked at fairly, call into question the American people's equal take of the freedoms that set our great nation apart.

Now, Hoffer's account may sound like some rote, first-day-of-class lecture—but it is in fact the setup he's chosen for an examination of the plagiarism and falsification scandals that have stirred up his profession. An outsider might think that the recent scandals involving Stephen Ambrose, Doris Kearns Goodwin, Joseph Ellis, and Michael Bellesiles concern merely those writers' personal wrongdoing. Whatever the shortcomings of the historical profession—not paying enough attention to women and minorities in the old days, say, or paying them too much attention these days—surely that is a separate matter from whether Doris Kearns Goodwin's *The Fitzgeralds and the Kennedys* lifted copy from Lynne McTaggart's earlier *Kathleen Kennedy: Her Life and Times*.

Not so, according to Hoffer, who believes the recent crop of scandals is, like everything else in American history these days, indeed, about women and minorities. Hoffer believes that for us to understand the scandals properly, we must travel the long road connecting early pro-American "consensus" historians to the radical anti-American historians of the 1960s. In this, he *increases* the divide between academic historians and readers of popular history, even as he intends to close it. With Hoffer spending 139 out of 240 pages on the history of *writing* history, his book actually proves that what interests historians is not what interests non-historians about the past.

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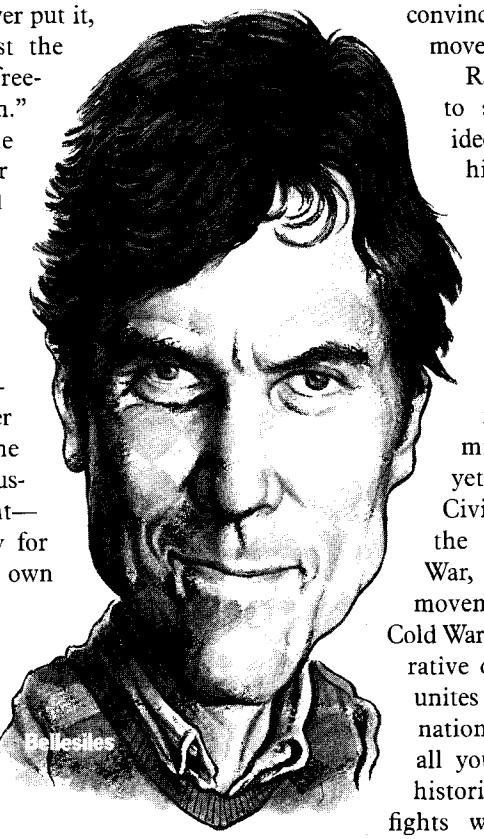
The most relevant part of this extended prelude concerns the new historians who began climbing the ranks in the mid-1960s—Hoffer included. They were defined by two ambitions: to call into question American history as it was handed down to them, and to live out their New Left convictions as professional academics. These historians, says Hoffer, "discerned an essential relationship between the writing of history and current events." Sometimes current events took precedence over history writing, as when the radical historian Jesse Lemisch feuded with fellow radical Eugene Genovese over whether to use the 1969 convention of the American Historical Association to protest American involvement in Vietnam. Sticking to his guns all these years later, Lemisch told an audience at Columbia University in April 2002 that "activist experience gives the historian experiential understanding of the power of the state . . . and the depth of commitment of those with power to maintaining the standing order." And not only that: "A good dose of tear gas makes us think more clearly as historians."

Goodwin

Still, this analysis from *Past Imperfect* helps elucidate at least one of the scandals: that of Michael Bellesiles, the former Emory University professor caught falsifying research on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century probate records in *Arming America*, his book on gun ownership in the antebellum United States. "A second-generation new historian," in Hoffer's genealogy, Bellesiles wore his political sympathies on his sleeve. Later, when his groundbreaking research was found seriously wanting in credibility, Bellesiles briefly pretended that this was all a mix-up, because, really, he liked guns and was an outdoorsman himself. But in the book's introduction, he openly sneered at Charlton Heston and the NRA. Indeed, if Bellesiles had proved what he claimed in *Arming America*—that guns were not commonplace in early America—then the historical-context part of the Second Amendment debate would have undergone a major shift in favor of the gun-control crowd.

His friendly reviewers understood all this very clearly—reading the book, as one reviewer put it, as a "brief against the myths that align freedom with the gun." Conversely, if the book hadn't so clear an agenda, it would never have received the scrutiny that exposed its faulty foundation. The dual burdens of the new historians—to discover the truth about the past and fight for justice in the present—may be too heavy for the profession's own good.


Bellesiles

This conclusion, however, is not one that Hoffer draws in *Past Imperfect*. Hoffer is on the whole too sensitive and too much a man of the ivory tower to dismiss or salvage the case for an activist professoriate. He thinks calling someone's argument "convenient" or "predictable" a devastating blow.

Meanwhile he treats his colleagues with kid gloves. Discussing acknowledged socialists and other radicals among the new historians, he refers to their politics as belonging to the "so-called New Left," as if he can't let the phrase pass without saluting his own unstated reservations about the newness or leftness of the New Left.

The intellectual theft of Goodwin and Ambrose, and the false boasting of Joseph Ellis, are—by comparison with the case of Bellesiles—just glory-seeking done on the cheap. Such lies of the rich and famous are, actually, irrelevant to any discussion of the history profession per se. Hoffer makes good on his professional training with a fairly expert sorting of evidence. But his thesis that all of these cases are the byproduct of an ongoing dialectical correction between the old historians and the new becomes less convincing as the book moves along.

Rather, it begins to seem only the ideology of the new historians deserves to be implicated in the recent scandals. We can imagine a consensus history that doesn't ignore women or minorities, and yet finds in the Civil War, suffrage, the Second World War, the civil-rights movement, and the Cold War an ongoing narrative of freedom that unites us all in a great national story. But if all you're doing as a historian is picking fights with the NRA, you're likely to miss it. ♦

Doris Kearns Goodwin illustration by Earl Keleny; Michael Bellesiles by Drew Friedman.

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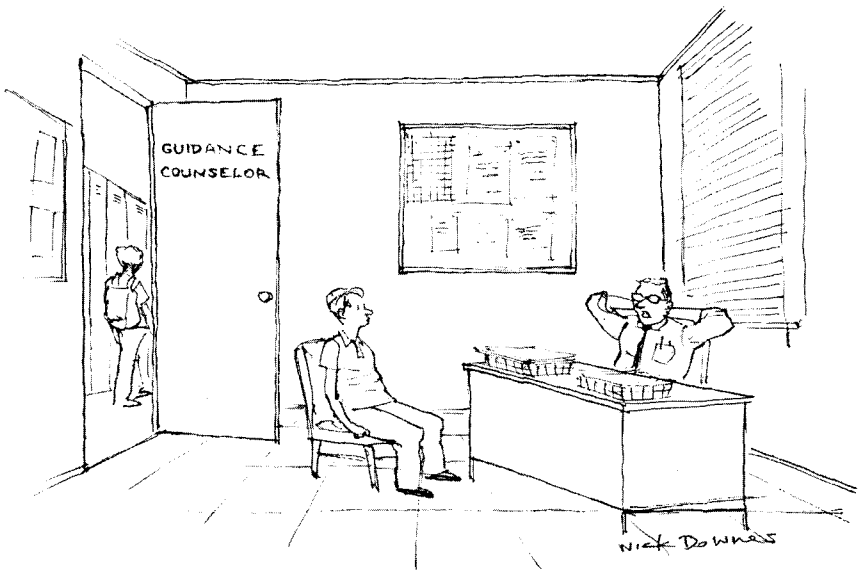

"Don't dismiss dead-end jobs out of hand, Jimmy."

Books in Brief

***Consumer's Guide to a Brave New World* by Wesley J. Smith (Encounter, 219 pp., $25.95)** Regular readers of Wesley Smith's web and magazine commentary on bioethics questions will find much that is familiar. But it is only when one sees Smith's argument put together in book-length form that the coherence of it all stands out. Smith's analysis revolves around the character—perhaps *flavor* is the better word—of the increasingly prominent debates surrounding stem cells, cloning, genetic engineering, enhancement techniques, and other new human biotechnologies.

Smith started out his career in public-policy debates as a Naderite, coauthoring works with Ralph Nader, and his initial forays into the life issues were dominated by the idea that we ought to be worried about such things as, say, euthanasia, because they represent large corporations threatening the poor. Over the years, he's broadened his case, but something of the old Naderism is present in the ironic title: *Consumer's Guide to a Brave New World*.

The book's first section offers an accessible overview of the basic scientific, political, and moral issues—though a primer may be wasted on the likely reader of such a book. The real prize comes in the later analytical chapters. Smith has a sharp eye for the market and offers several uncommon insights about the march of biotechnology. He notes, for instance, the tone of those who argue most vociferously for the freedom to research without constraints, and he finds that it reveals an abiding ideology, indeed almost a religion, of "scientism." The biotech advocates see themselves as offering the world a path to rational salvation, available to all if only we will put aside our ancient prejudices and join the march of progress.

Right along with this spiritual devotion, Smith also observes the operation of the profit motive. He points out that academic scientists are increasingly moved by the lure of valuable patents, often to the detriment of basic scientific transparency and honesty. The recently passed stem-cell referendum in California, which created a $3 billion taxpayer-funded institution run and overseen by the very people who most stand to benefit financially from any advance it produces, offers a stark example of this insufficiently appreciated element of the debate.

Still, the biotech revolution we are witnessing today will not be driven by government or by the scientific establishment, but by the choices of individuals as consumers. In this sense, Smith's all-too-common allusion to Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* falls short. In Huxley's dystopia, dreadful war and the breakdown of social order led the people to demand that government offer stability, which the government did by resorting to biotechnology. But in our time we have not been forced into the arms of a new eugenics by war or disorder. We have instead begun to choose the revolution for ourselves, moved by the common desires for extended youth, better health, greater strength, or above-average children, and never quite aware of where the road we have begun to travel may be leading us. The dark side of our brave new world is not as obvious as that of Huxley's, though it may turn out to be even worse for us.

We are building our biotech future choice by choice, and doing so fundamentally as consumers. Smith's book reminds us that at the very least we should also be sure to do so as responsible citizens, thinking of the big picture and the consequences. More than a consumer's guide, the book is an illuminating citizen's guide to the future. And to judge by the decision made recently by the citizens of Smith's home state of California, it could not have come too soon.

—Yuval Levin

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Kmart is acquiring Sears, Roebuck for $11.5 billion.
—News item

Parody

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Directors

From: Kris Krawford, Kmarket Research

Re: Implementation of Merger

Corporate rebranding: We recently received the preliminary report from our $30-million, 5-year contract with ImagInc, who have determined that both Kmart and Sears, Roebuck enjoy broad name recognition. By retaining the prominent "K" of Kmart and contracting "Sears" and "Roebuck" into one word--K-Suck--we will retain these powerful brand attributes going forward. K-Suck conveys our hopes for the future as well as a healthy respect for our recent history. Focus-group results were also positive for complete rebranding, however, so we do urge management to consider the alternative, youth-friendly name, El Diablo.

Leveraging brand synergies: We look forward to the cross-selling opportunities between existing brands such as Craftsman and Lands' End. We envision the shopper of K-Suck deploying a Craftsman pipe-wrench, knees cradled in downy Craftsman kneepads, squatting in luxuriant, no-slip trousers from a new line to be called Plumber's End.

Niche expansion: Provided no antitrust issues arise, the acquisition of Sears will finally give us a stranglehold on the low-price, low-quality market. Our position is simple and consistent: Let Wal-Mart have "everyday great deals," and Target have "not-bad stuff." K-Suck will be the brand of choice for anyone looking for unbeatable deals on the lowest-quality brands.

Customer outreach: We feel that K-Suck will reach a younger, "hipper" audience, one that would play against stereotypes of Sears as the "Grandma" store or Kmart as "that stinkhole that went bankrupt." Clothing will be one of the spearheads of this effort, and we're enjoying good focus-group testing with the "Unfashionable Is the New Black" campaign. (While results have been less consistent, we remain upbeat about the prospects for our line of All-Rayon Office Casual.)

Kmarket Research
120 Avenue K, Naperville, Illinois 60540 • 888-555-KRAP • kmarketresearch.com

the weekly Standard
November 29, 2004

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The Plight of Immigrants from Mexico

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Immigrants from Mexico do far worse when they migrate to the United States than do immigrants from other countries. Those difficulties are more a reflection of U.S. immigration policy than they are of underlying cultural differences. The following facts from the 2000 U.S. Census reveal that Mexican immigrants do not move into mainstream American society as rapidly as do other immigrants.

1. Eighty percent of non-Mexican immigrants are fluent in English. Among Mexicans, the number is 49 percent.

2. Non-Mexican (working) immigrants have an average wage income of $21,000 a year. Mexican immigrants have an average wage income of $12,000 a year.

3. The typical non-Mexican immigrant has a high school diploma. The typical Mexican immigrant has less than an eighth-grade education.

4. Compared to other Hispanics, only 49 percent of Mexican immigrants are fluent in English, compared to 62 percent of non-Mexican Hispanics.

5. Mexican average incomes are about 75 percent that of other Hispanic immigrants, and Mexican immigrants have about two and a half fewer years of schooling.

Two other facts are worth noting. First, Mexican immigrants live in communities where 15 percent of the residents were also born in Mexico. Non-Mexican immigrants live in communities where fewer than 3 percent of the residents are from their native land. Second, Mexican immigrants account for a much higher proportion of the immigrant population than does any other group—29 percent in the 2000 census.

The last two points are key. **Individuals become assimilated when their incentives to do so are great.** An immigrant from Mexico who moves to East Los Angeles can survive knowing only Spanish and interacting primarily with people from her or his own community. A Bulgarian immigrant to Billings, Montana, must learn English quickly or return to Bulgaria.

A number of studies suggest that the most important factor in explaining English fluency and other aspects of assimilation is the proportion of individuals in one's community who come from his or her native land. When there are many, assimilation is slow; when there are few, assimilation is rapid. **Mexicans often do poorly because they have been part of a large wave of immigrants who have similar cultures, languages, and backgrounds.**

One other factor is that U.S. immigration policy selects immigrants from Mexico primarily on the basis of family connection rather than skill. Immigrants from other countries are more likely to enter and take jobs in highly skilled occupations. In fact, our most able immigrants come from North Africa—Morocco, Algeria, and Libya. Is this because those countries have the world's best educational systems and cultures? No, it is because it is virtually impossible to enter the United States from those countries. The only North Africans to get in are highly educated and talented.

Nothing inherent in Mexicans causes difficulties for them when they come to the United Stated. Instead, it is our immigration policy that encourages the formation of large, insular Mexican communities. Additionally, our policies do not employ the same selection criteria for Mexicans as they do for applicants from other countries.

Moving in the direction of skills-based immigration and away from relative-based immigration is one step we can take to ensure that immigrants do well and become integrated when they come to the United States. Moreover, a conscious policy that encourages a more balanced distribution of countries from which we draw immigrants will improve the speed of assimilation and raise the incomes of both immigrants and U.S. natives.

—Edward P. Lazear

Edward P. Lazear is the Morris Arnold Cox Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution and the Jack Steele Parker Professor of Human Resources, Management and Economics at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business.

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